

THE MILITANT

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Ottawa feeds
anti-Quebecois chauvinism

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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

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Indonesia: political space opens for workers

BY NAOMI CRAINE
AND BOB AIKEN

BANDUNG, Indonesia — Visitors approaching the Bandung Institute of Technology (ITB) are greeted by a huge banner in front of the campus steps. It lists the demands of student protesters since the May 21 resignation of Indonesian president Suharto. These include the freedom to organize, rapid elections, an end to military involvement in politics, and no more corruption and nepotism. Next to the banner are several lean-to shelters, which have served as the students' *posko*, or base camp, for the last two months.

"The basic thing is the economy," said Retno, an ITB student, during a June 1 visit, explaining what sparked the student demonstrations that spread across Indonesia demanding Suharto's resignation, as well as the protest actions since.

"We can't earn a living any more. People can't buy food," she said. "So we had to protest. This regime has lasted too long."

Our conversation was interrupted as students crowded into the shelter to see a TV news broadcast. Some 300 workers were demonstrating outside the Ministry of Manpower in the capital city of Jakarta, a three-hour train ride northwest from here. The rally, organized by the Action Committee of Indonesian Workers (KABI), was protesting layoffs and demanding an end to military intervention in labor disputes and the repeal of antilabor laws.

Retno noted, "The regime is still there, although Suharto stepped down."

Another student, Radja, joined the discussion. "We want elections — multiparty gen-

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Puerto Rico workers protest phone company sale

BY RON RICHARDS

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico — One thousand workers staged a militant protest here May 27 against the imminent sale of the state-owned Puerto Rico Telephone Company (PRTC). The protest was attacked by police, who, greatly outnumbered by the unionists, were forced to negotiate a retreat. Later that day, Gov. Pedro Rosselló made the formal announcement that the telephone company would be sold to a consortium led by GTE.

The noontime march was held in front of the central offices of the PRTC. Telephone workers arrived from all the metro work sites. At first the rally was almost entirely outside workers in their uniforms and steel-toed boots. Then the inside workers poured out of the three buildings, many of them women, and the crowd grew rapidly to about 1,000 people. The picket line took up two lanes of traffic for blocks.

The vast majority of the marchers were

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5,300 transport workers strike in Philadelphia

Unionists resist deeper two-tier wage, erosion of rights on job

BY PETE SEIDMAN

PHILADELPHIA — At noon on June 1, the 5,300 members of Transport Workers Union (TWU) Local 234 here shut down the SEPTA buses, trolleys, and subways used daily by 435,000 people in the country's fifth-largest city.

SEPTA is the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority.

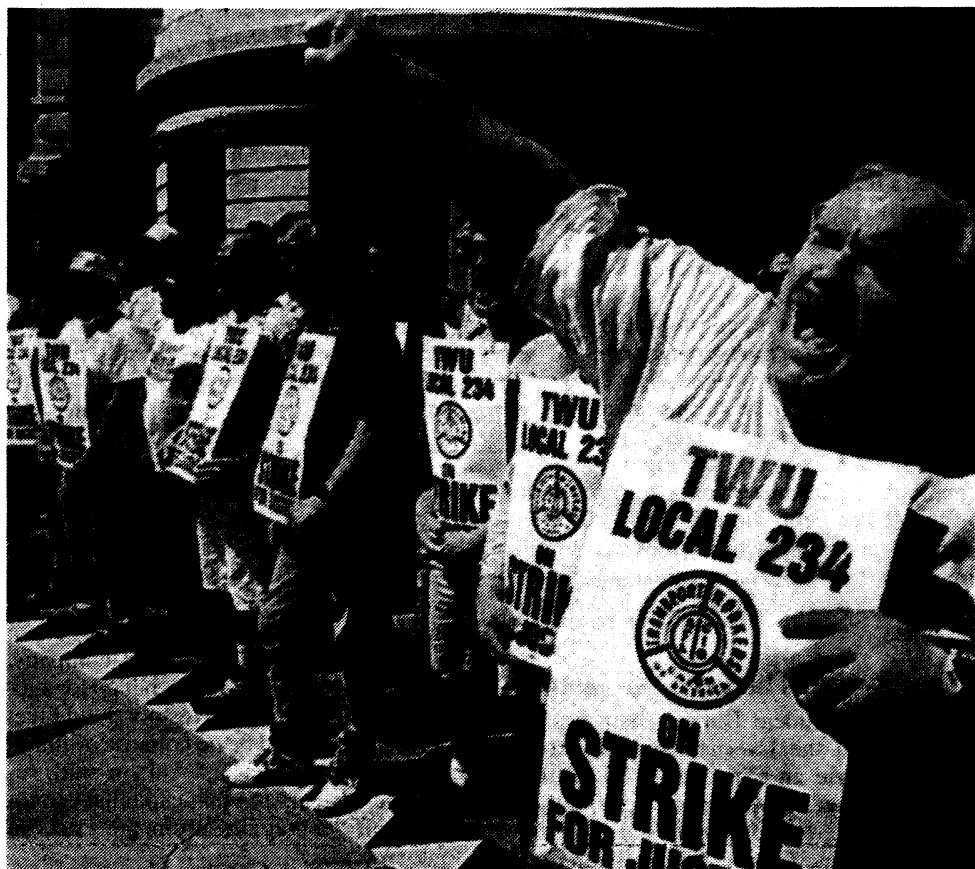
Within a few hours, the strength of the strike was evident throughout the city. Crawling rush hour traffic and long lines and delays on overburdened suburban rail lines showed the power of the TWU's answer to demands by the Democratic administration of Mayor Edward Rendell and SEPTA, which were clearly aimed at forcing a strike.

The city administration hopes it can deepen its antilabor offensive by moving from the negotiating table to a strike, where it will attempt to isolate and defeat the union.

The strikers are battling SEPTA's efforts to deepen a two-tier wage setup, use part-time workers, restrict workers compensation, contract out work, and undermine seniority and other union rights.

The TWU organized four rallies during the first two days of the strike. On June 1 hundreds of strikers and supporters marched

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Transit workers on strike in Philadelphia rally in front of City Hall June 1

California antilabor referendum fails

BY JIM ALTENBERG

SAN FRANCISCO — Working people in California pushed back a serious attack on political and trade union rights by turning down Proposition 226

in the June 2 elections. By a 53 percent margin, voters defeated the ballot measure, which challenged the right of trade unions to give money to election cam-

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Sinn Fein Youth holds national conference

BY JACK WILLEY
AND ANNE HOWIE

NEWRY, Northern Ireland — Fresh from recent protests against police harassment and other political actions, 98 Sinn Fein Youth activists from across the island, north and south, came together here May 30 for a national conference on "Republicanism Today." Sinn Fein is the political party in the forefront of the fight for a united and democratic republic of Ireland.

"First and foremost, we are an activist organization, holding street protests around the most important questions facing youth today," stated National Organizer Eoin O Broin at the conference.

Three large banners used in recent protests hung from the front of the conference hall, demanding "Free all POWs," "Neamhspleachas — Independence," and "Disband the RUC," referring to the Royal Ulster Constabulary, the police force imposed in Northern Ireland by the British government.

Sinn Fein Youth protests have been aimed primarily at the RUC and the British army troops that occupy the six northern counties of Ireland.

On May 22, SFY in Dublin held a demonstration outside the Garda [Irish police force] Special Forces Branch headquarters protesting the increased harassment of Sinn Fein Youth activists by the Special Branch, the political police. SFY in Dublin and across the island have also participated in demonstrations organized by Saoirse, which fights for the release of all Irish political prisoners, as well as actions calling for the demilitarization of the northern six counties

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Students in Santa Cruz, California, march to defend bilingual education



Militant/Jacob Perasso

University of California at Santa Cruz (UCSC) students march to defend bilingual education June 1. More than 200 turned out for the protest that called for a no vote on Proposition 227. The measure, which cuts state funding for bilingual instruction, was approved June 2. Members of the United Farm Workers and Service Employees International Union joined the march. More than 60 UCSC students took part in a June 3 meeting on campus to map further actions.

Financial tremors in Tokyo

Moody's Investor Service Inc. downgraded its credit and financial strength ratings of five major Japanese banks May 27, citing concern over that country's declining economy and the infectious financial crisis in Asia. It put four other banks under review for possible downgrade.

Nissan, Japan's second-largest carmaker, announced \$102 million in losses. That company has posted losses for four out of five years. Nissan bosses plan to lay off workers and freeze investments in countries outside Japan, with the exception of the United States. Truck maker Isuzu Motor, majority owned by General Motors, had a 37 percent profit slide, which it attributed to the slump in demand in crisis-wracked southeast Asia. Suzuki Motor posted a profit loss for the first time in four years. Toshiba, the second-largest electrical machinery manufacturer in Japan, suffered an 89 percent fall in profits.

Meanwhile, the unemployment rate in Japan accelerated to 4.1 percent — the highest official figure since Tokyo began recording it in 1953, and just below the official U.S. rate of 4.3 percent. Unemployment among Japanese youth who are male is now 9.1 percent. More than 850,000 construction and manufacturing jobs were eliminated in 1997. Service industry jobs increased 1.8 percent, slower than in previous months.

Moscow seeks larger IMF loan

Russian president Boris Yeltsin has requested that the International Monetary Fund increase an expected \$700 million dollar loan, an installment on a \$10 billion loan package, in order to bolster the ruble and stem financial panic. The Russian Central Bank reported that about half of the country's \$23 billion in gold and currency reserves have been depleted since October. The Moscow stock market, which plummeted 11 percent May 27, is off more than

50 percent this year so far. And bond prices are declining.

The Yeltsin government has taken drastic measures to restore confidence of capitalist investors, tripling interest rates to 150 percent and sharply lowering the asking price on the state-owned Rosneft oil company, which received no bids when put up for auction May 19. "Foreign investors should feel confident there will be no collapse of financial markets in Russia," Yeltsin said, responding to fears of what capitalist economists call "contagion" from the crisis in southeast Asia.

European governments stage 'antiterrorist' sweeps

The governments of France, Belgium, Italy, Germany, and Switzerland organized

"antiterrorist" crackdowns May 26 aimed primarily at Algerians, ostensibly in preparation for the June 10-July 12 World Cup soccer championship in France. The cops arrested at least 89 "suspected Islamic militants" for interrogation. Jean-Louis Bruguiere, described by the capitalist media as "France's leading antiterrorist judge," led the operation. French cops swept at least 10 different areas around the country, detaining more than 50 people. They confiscated a computer, videos, pamphlets, and a total of \$150,000, but found no weapons or bombs.

Belgian cops invaded 13 homes in Brussels and one in the southern city of Charleroi, detaining 10 people. In Germany police raided seven apartments of Algerian immigrants and seized computer disks, videotapes, and other personal belongings. Twenty-four Algerians were arrested in Italy, and Swiss government spokesman Juerg Blaser said a "large police operation" against Algerian immigrants was carried out outside Zurich.

Poland miners win job cut delay

Coal miners in Poland pushed back that government's plan to carry out massive layoffs and other "market reforms." Warsaw planned to cut mining industry jobs in half within five years in a drive to make the coal industry profitable. Of the 240,000 miners in Poland, 105,000 are still scheduled to be dismissed — down from 118,000. The regime also backed off its proposal to freeze

wages until 2002, conceding that wage rises should continue to match those won by other industrial unions. One thousand miners and relatives who support the Solidarity trade union, which is tied to the party heading the government, marched in Silesia May 26 to demand a 40-hour work-week, tax breaks for large families, and longer maternity leaves.

Ethiopia and Eritrea governments at odds

The Ethiopian government has mobilized tens of thousands of army personnel — regular soldiers, veterans, and youth doing compulsory military service — to that country's northwestern border, where a conflict has arisen with the government of Eritrea, which won its independence from Ethiopia in 1993. The ruling Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front accuses the Eritrean government of occupying 400 square miles it claims belong to Ethiopia. Ethiopian prime minister Meles Zenawi warned the Eritrean government that if its forces did not pull out, a full-scale conflict would ensue. The Eritrean government maintains

that the boundaries established during Italian colonial rule still apply.

Zimbabwe youth: 'Mugabe out'

Hundreds of students protested outside Zimbabwe's parliament May 29, calling for President Robert Mugabe to step down. Riot cops guarded the parliament building with rifles, stun guns and tear gas, but did not attack. The day before, 3,000 students blockaded the building chanting, "Zimbabwe Suharto," inspired by the recent mass protests in Indonesia that preceded Suharto's resignation. Strikes and other protests have hit the country, including rebellions in January sparked by 30 percent price hikes.

Washington trims Gulf armada, leaves 20,000 troops in area

U.S. defense secretary William Cohen announced a reduction by half of its military forces in the Arab-Persian Gulf. That will leave about 20,000 GIs, 15 warships, and the USS *Stennis* aircraft carrier. Some 6,500 U.S. army soldiers have been conducting military exercises in Kuwait since February. More than 44,000 U.S. troops were stationed in the Gulf early this year as Washington prepared to launch a large-scale attack on Iraq. Cohen cautioned that Washington could very easily decide to re-escalate its military presence as it saw fit. "The bomber force can go back in very quickly," he warned.

— BRIAN TAYLOR



Workers march in Athens, Greece, during a 24-hour nationwide strike May 27. The action was called by the General Confederation of Labor in solidarity with workers at the state-run Ionian Bank, who went out May 11 protesting government sell-off plans. Striking transport and utility workers also joined the labor action. The 4,200 bank workers voted May 28 to continue the strike, defying a court ruling that deemed the work stoppage illegal.

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Editor: NAOMI CRAINE

Business Manager: MAURICE WILLIAMS

Editorial Staff: Megan Arney, Hilda Cuzco, Martin Koppel, Argiris Malapanis, Brian Taylor, and Maurice Williams.

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Irish fighters oppose rightist marches

BY ANNE HOWIE
AND JACK WILLEY

BELFAST, Northern Ireland — More than 400 local residents of the Garvaghy Road area of Portadown, Northern Ireland, turned out May 30 to protest a triumphalist march through their neighborhood by the rightist Orange Order. In response, they were fired on by the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC) with more than 40 plastic bullets.

The Orange Order is a rightist organization that supports the continued British rule in Northern Ireland. The RUC, a pro-British police force, protected the supremacist marchers, who organize parades through predominantly Catholic areas every summer through the fall in Northern Ireland, commonly referred to as "the marching season."

Early in the morning of May 30, the RUC and British army troops moved into Garvaghy Road to secure the route for the rightists' march. The first parade by the Young Portadown Orange Lodge was countered by a small nationalist protest but passed by peacefully. Nationalists are those who are fighting for a united Ireland.

By the afternoon, as the junior Orange Order members were preparing their return march, larger numbers of nationalists began to gather along the route. The RUC halted the returning parade as it neared the Garvaghy Road, coming under attack from



Youth stand up to RUC police May 30 on Garvaghy Road in Portadown, Northern Ireland, after cops allowed rightist Orange Order to march through Catholic areas.

the parade supporters. The cops then began clearing the residents away from their homes, batoning them and firing plastic bullets. Following closely behind the RUC, and backed up by the British Army, loyalists tore down Irish flags from lampposts

and vandalized property. The parade was eventually forced through behind the RUC lines.

Nationalists responded to the RUC assault with rocks, bottles, and petrol bombs. The RUC and British army continued to attack

residents until they withdrew at 9:00 p.m.

While Ronald Flanagan, Chief Constable of the RUC, claimed the cops had "acted with tremendous restraint and in the most measured manner," and attempted to blame the local nationalists for the trouble, residents told another story. Breandan MacCionnaith, a local councillor and member of the Garvaghy Road Residents' Coalition, pointed to a journalist injured by the cops, saying, "The fact that a cameraman was hit by a plastic bullet less than 15 yards from police lines shows how indiscriminate they were."

The *Irish News* also reported the description by a local resident of a man who was shot with a plastic bullet after leaving a store. "I saw him going down and there was blood coming out of his mouth. I thought he had been shot. He wasn't rioting, he just walked into the middle of it."

The same article quoted a local youth who described how the RUC "shot a boy from about 10 yards away and hit him in the chest." He was treated in intensive care. The RUC said 15 cops were injured.

Provocative role of the RUC

The *Irish News* reported that RUC and British soldiers stationed in the People's Park taunted local people as they made their way towards the town center. Sinn Fein leader Martin McGuinness called the RUC's role "provocative." Sinn Fein is the political party leading the fight for a united Ireland and the end of colonial rule in the North.

The May 30 parade route had been agreed to by the Parades Commission, a body set up last year by the British government supposedly to judge on contentious parade routes. MacCionnaith pointed out that this was "despite the fact that this parade has caused problems over the last few years."

In a statement by Sinn Fein, Gerry Kelly described the Commission's decision as "just incomprehensible, especially considering the present climate." He added that the RUC actions highlighted the "brutal and sectarian nature of the force."

The assault by the RUC comes just more than a week after the recent agreement between the British and Irish governments and nationalist and Unionist forces, known as the Good Friday Agreement, gained a majority in referendums in the North and South of Ireland. In reference to the agreement MacCionnaith explained, "This makes you wonder about the agreement which we thought we had. I would say 90 percent of people in this area voted for that agreement. They voted for change. They voted for an end to provocative marches, they voted for equality and justice and they certainly didn't get any here."

A long hot summer?

The residents committees, made up of those who live in the areas where the rightist marches occur and who organize to protest them, have called on the Orange Order to discuss the parades. So far, the loyalists have refused. Many people here told these reporters that the residents committees were gearing up for a long hot summer, ready to protest the triumphalist marches.

This year the Garvaghy Road Residents Coalition has voted to extend their protest to people from other areas. Several nationalists told the *Militant* that although they weren't there last year when the RUC attacked the residents, they are planning to go to Garvaghy Road for the upcoming Drumcree Orange parade this year.

Besides the RUC and British army action in Portadown, nationalists report a general increase in the level of cop and military activity. Sinn Fein president Gerry Adams raised the issue in a May 29 meeting with U.S. president William Clinton. He described to reporters afterward how the British army was making house raids in Belfast, besieging one house for three hours and abusing a Sinn Fein representative who went to investigate the situation. Sinn Fein Youth have also reported several incidents of harassment by the RUC.

The Drumcree Orange parade on Garvaghy Road is due to take place in July. But that parade will attempt to march the entire length of the Garvaghy Road as opposed to the May 30 parade, which passed on only the lower part of it. This is one of the most contentious events of the "marching season" and the scene of major RUC and British army violence over the last two years.

Sinn Fein youth hold national conference

Continued from front page

of Ireland and an end to the forced partition of their nation by British imperialism.

On May 24, six SFY activists demonstrated at the Antrim-Donagall football match during halftime, unfurling banners demanding, "No change on Rule 21" and "Disband the RUC." Rule 21 of the Gaelic Athletic Association prohibits members of the occupation forces from participating in sports within the association. This action took place leading up to the vote in the GAA over whether to lift the rule. It also followed a national action May 17 by more than 50 youth in Omagh calling for the disbanding of the RUC and opposing changes to Rule 21. Maintaining Rule 21 has been a major campaign of SFY in recent weeks. Many nationalists see any changes to the rule as part of legitimizing the British occupation forces in the northern six counties of Ireland. On May 30, the GAA voted to maintain the rule until changes are made to the RUC.

Discuss questions facing Irish youth

Speakers at the two panel discussions at the conference were Caoimhghín Ó Caoláin, a member of the parliament in the Republic of Ireland; Martina McIlkenny, who will stand as a Sinn Fein candidate in North

Belfast; Matt Carthy, a SFY leader in Dublin, Anne Speed, Sinn Fein National Women's Officer, and others.

Ó Caoláin spoke about the declining social conditions of working people in Ireland. He said many economists call Ireland the "Celtic Tiger" because of economic growth in the 1990s. "However, the stripes on the tiger's back spell inequality. Those who benefit from the current growth are few and far between." In the North, Ó Caoláin pointed out, workers faced additional problems such as anti-Catholic discrimination, which results in male unemployment for Catholics being twice that of Protestants.

He called the proposed minimum wage currently being debated in the British government a slap in the face of all working people, especially young workers. "They are debating whether or not to set a minimum of £3.60 [\$6.00] an hour for workers 25 years and older," Ó Caoláin noted. "For workers under 25, the wage would be £3.20 an hour, and no minimum for young people under 18 years old. We can lead youth in the North and South of Ireland in a campaign to demand a minimum wage of no less than £5 for all working people regardless of age," he said. Six SFY activists hung a banner demanding a £5 minimum wage during

this year's May Day march in Dublin.

Carthy spoke about the scourge of heroin addiction, especially in Dublin and its devastating effects on the lives of many Irish youth. "Unemployment, poverty, and drugs play a prominent role in youth life, especially in urban areas," he said. "Heroin use is a symptom of social inequality, not the cause of it. Punishment does not solve the problem — only getting proper health services, and making those services available for young people now."

The second panel discussion, under the title "Independence: national, local and personal," included talks about the role of British imperialism in Ireland and about the fight for women's rights.

Most of the discussion period following the presentations focused on the Good Friday Agreement, which was recently approved in referendums by large majorities in both the Irish Republic and Northern Ireland. Questions included: "How do we avoid getting caught up in the quagmire of electoral politics?" "Didn't the Unionists vote 'yes' to put us in a corner?" "Does this mean the republican movement is abandoning armed struggle?" "Where does Sinn Fein Youth fit in youth movements in Europe and

Continued on Page 4

Activists meet to discuss advancing solidarity with Irish freedom struggle

BY JANE HARRIS
AND MARK GILSDORF

HARTFORD, Connecticut — "On behalf of all the people who have depended on you — the prisoners, the people at the receiving end of repression, the people on the front line — a very, very hearty thank you," Sinn Fein president Gerry Adams told some 300 people here at Irish Northern Aid's Annual General Meeting, held here May 30. "You people deserve not just our heartiest thanks for what you have done but our congratulations."

Adams referred to the agreement on the future of Northern Ireland, known as the Good Friday Agreement, which was negotiated in talks that included Sinn Fein earlier this year. It was approved by a large margin in referenda held May 22 both in Northern Ireland and in the Irish Republic.

Describing his meeting with President William Clinton the day before, he told the audience, "We pointed out that from Sinn Fein's perspective, the Good Friday Agreement is only the beginning. All of the issues need to be resolved speedily and urgently." Those issues include recent British army raids in South Armagh and the "demilitarization" of the conflict.

Adams called for the British occupation

troops in the North "to be off the streets and back home as soon as possible," receiving thunderous applause. "The RUC is unacceptable. It would be as if the NYPD [New York Police Department] had killed 5,000 New Yorkers, and as if the NYPD in collusion with secret death squads had killed another 10,000," he said. We don't need a paramilitary force. We don't need death squads. We need a policing service.

"We believe that the 5 million people who live on the island of Ireland have the right to be free. We believe that whether or not we're unionists, nationalists, or republicans, we can do a better job than any English minister," the Sinn Fein leader stated.

"I said to President Clinton," Adams told supporters, "when things settle down, when [Ulster Unionist Party leader] David Trimble has been stabilized, the North cannot be left in a state of limbo. He compared the situation to a couple in a relationship. 'It doesn't take two people to end it. It takes one. And the British have said the relationship is over but that the children have to grow up. They have to wait for the majority in the North.'"

Referring to the tasks ahead for supporters of Irish freedom, Adams continued, "We expect people here to let Britain and the U.S.

government know that pressure must be put to get rid of partitions. There will be resistance to this. The role you people have played is an example to everyone," he said, urging all in attendance to redouble their efforts on behalf of the Irish prisoners held both in the United States and in Ireland, as well as defending those Washington seeks to extradite.

He warned of the hurdles that lie ahead, referring to "that section of the English establishment that still sees Ireland as its empire—they're very slow learners."

The Good Friday Agreement is "only the beginning. That is why we [Sinn Fein leaders] were so quick to get to the U.S. after the referendum. I implore you to go back and do what you do best," he said referring to the work by members of Irish Northern Aid. "We would not have gotten where we are today without you people in this hall."

He added, "I don't want to give you a bum steer, but it has been my conviction for a very, very long time that we are going to get freedom for the people of Ireland."

Adams also expressed his thanks to Sen. Christopher Dodd of Massachusetts, who spoke before his arrival.

Socialist Workers candidates Andrea

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Australia dock strike brings fighters together

BY TOM ALTER

SYDNEY, Australia — A week-long trip to Australia in late May, talking to dock workers, coal miners, meatpackers, and students, gave this reporter a firsthand feel for the impact of the battle to defend the Maritime Union of Australia (MUA) against the efforts by the bosses and government to bust their union. Accompanying me on this fact-finding visit was Gale Shangold, a garment worker and the Socialist Workers candidate for governor of California.

Patrick Stevedores, backed by the government, had provoked the labor battle by sacking its entire workforce April 7 to try to break the MUA. After a month of maintaining solid picket lines, organizing mass rallies, and other activities, the unionists forced the bosses to back down and they returned to work.

Every worker we talked to, starting with wharfies at the CTAL company's Port Botany dock, where we spent time in the lunch room, said that while the return to work by MUA members was a victory, the fight was far from over.

Dave McElhinney, who has worked at CTAL for two years, commented on the strike, "It helped bring us all together. If we don't stick together we'll all get shafted.... This brought the old and the new blokes together."

Following the wharfies' return to work on May 7, Patrick demanded up to 750 redundancies (layoffs) and wage cuts of up to 30 percent. It proposed annual salaries to eliminate premium pay for overtime. Some 200 job cuts would come from contracting

out cleaning, security, maintenance, and lashing jobs.

We met with Bobby Lee, one of the workers declared "undesirable" by the bosses. He is a delegate who is among 25 wharfies who Patrick has refused to put back to work. Patrick claims these unionists intimidated and threatened bosses during the lockout. The MUA is taking these cases to court as unfair dismissals.

"The government says they want reform on the waterfront. But what they really want to do is crush the union movement. If they knock off the MUA, the rest [of the unions] will fall like dominoes," said Lee.

These comments ring true with a number of workers, and explain the large number of workers from other industries and unions who joined the MUA in their struggle on the picket lines.

One such worker is Bram Bernie, a coal miner who works at the Howick coal mine outside of Singleton. Joining supporters of the Communist League in Australia, we talked to coal miners at Howick as they got off work. Afterward we met with Bernie and talked for several hours. Bernie reported that miners had just won a victory at the Hunter Valley No. 1 mine, where a strike last year beat back Rio Tinto's attempt to bust the union.

He explained that after miners returned to work the company demanded a secret ballot election to ask miners if they wanted to bargain through the union or sign individual contracts. The bosses claimed that the only reason miners had not signed individual contracts was that they were being

intimidated by the union. Rio Tinto announced that 192 miners would be laid off at the Hunter Valley No 1 mine in July. Attempting to sway the vote, the bosses said that they would do whatever was possible to keep those who voted against the union but in the case that the layoffs reached these miners they would receive an extra \$22,000 in redundancy pay. Despite the bosses' campaign, the miners voted 93 percent to stay with their union.

Two days after the discussion with Bernie, the *Sydney Morning Herald* reported that the Australian Industrial Relations Commission ruled in favor of the coal bosses, ending the "last-on-first-off" rule giving companies the ability to retrench miners in economic downturns on "merit" rather than seniority. The ruling also ended rules giving preference of employment to union members and retrenched union members.

Bernie said that the coal companies have already begun to hire workers with no mining experience, hoping to erode the union. He said that at the Howick mine, which is also owned by Rio Tinto, the company recently spent millions of dollars trying to screen new hires through tests and interviews. Much to the disappointment of the company, the fourteen new hires all signed up to join the union on their first day at work.

Bernie had come to the MUA picket lines in Sydney with two friends of his, Tim Ireland and Steven Hawkins. Ireland and Hawkins are members of the meat workers union and work at the Fletcher meat works in Dubbo. The socialists candidates traveled

to Dubbo to meet with Ireland and Hawkins and to tour the meat works.

Ireland and Hawkins felt being at the MUA picket lines had a deep impact on them. "I couldn't believe the response we got. I was a bit overwhelmed. I couldn't wait to get back to Dubbo to tell the truth," said Hawkins. "Next time we could get a bus to go with us from Dubbo to Sydney," said Ireland. Dubbo is roughly six hours north of Sydney.

Negotiations between Fletcher and the meat workers union are currently under way. Both Ireland and Hawkins feel the government is out to bust the meat workers union along with the MUA.

Many workers see the alliance between the bosses and the government in their joint attack on the working class. Workers talked often about the need to get rid of the current government led by conservative John Howard since March 1996. A number of workers believe the way to do this is by electing the Australian Labour Party (ALP) into control of the government.

Ireland, Hawkins, and Bernie are supporters of the ALP. While acknowledging the role Labour governments have played in carrying out the bosses' attacks on the working class, these workers are fighting within the ALP for a class perspective. As Ireland put it, "We're the industrial wing of the Dubbo ALP."

Tom Alter is the Socialist Workers candidate for governor of Iowa and a member of United Food and Commercial Workers Local 1149.

Irish solidarity activists meet

Continued from Page 3

Morrell, running for U.S. Congress in the 8th District in Massachusetts and Ryan Kelly, a candidate for New York state comptroller, attended the meeting and received a warm reception to their written statement calling for British troops out of Ireland, disbanding the RUC, releasing imprisoned Irish freedom fighters, and stopping the deportations of republican fighters from the United States.

At the plenary session, Rosaleen Doherty, the head of the Political Prisoners Department of Irish Northern Aid, told activists that the two years' time for the release of political prisoners in the Good Friday Agreement "is not a guarantee—we must put it high on our agenda. There is much, much more to be done," she said, pointing to the 262 prisoners who remain behind bars.

Only 12 prisoners have been released from Irish jails, with six repatriated from England, and zero released from England.

Attending the meeting were relatives of

Richard Johnson, who has spent nine years in prison in the United States. Johnson was arrested in 1989 by the FBI for "conspiracy" to violate the Arms Control Act. Greetings by Johnson were read from behind the wire in Allenwood Prison in White Deer, Pennsylvania, by his brother.

Francine Broderick, an activist and wife of Irish activist Matt Morrison, urged members to get on campus with speakers and reach out to young people, and to step up efforts in defense of the prisoners known as the H-Block Three.

The Clinton administration announced last September that it was suspending deportation proceedings against Morrison and five other Irish activists.

Tim Cotton reported on the organization's membership, which has grown 42 percent since 1996. He proposed a membership drive.

Carissa Zall, from the Political Education Department of Irish Northern Aid, reported that INA will be helping to organize delegations to the north of Ireland over the course of the loyalist summer marching sea-



Militant/Greg McCartan

Sinn Féin president Gerry Adams addresses Irish Northern Aid meeting May 30

son to act as observers.

Concluding the day's sessions, Irish Northern Aid chairperson Paul Doris told

the membership, "It's the wrong time to say all the prisoners are going to be released. The Brits are saying that," referring to the fact that the British government not yet released Irish prisoners.

"We'll stop raising money when the Brits are out of Ireland."

Those at the gathering decided to hold the organization's next annual general meeting in Detroit the weekend following Memorial Day.

Those interested in joining the Irish Northern Aid Committee can contact the organization at 363 Seventh Avenue, Suite 405, New York, NY 10001. Telephone (212) 736-1916 or visit their website at www.inac.org

Sinn Féin Youth hold conference

Continued from page 3

the world?" O Caoláin said the legislative assembly that the agreement provides for will be "a battle a day." But he stated that Sinn Féin was going there to "fight for justice, equality, and freedom."

On the motivation of the Unionists who voted yes, O Caoláin said "[Ulster Unionist Party leader David] Trimble was dragged kicking and screaming to sign the document. Some of them recognize that this is as good as it gets for them." Speed pointed out that in similar circumstances in apartheid South Africa, then-president F.W. de Klerk "didn't see where the process was going. The struggle pushes it forward. Our job is to push them further than they want to go."

On the issue of "decommissioning," that is, the demand that the Irish Republican Army (IRA) turn in its weapons as part of a political settlement, Matt Carthy said it was up to the British government to decide whether there will be a resumption of the armed struggle. "Sinn Féin is a political party. We have no arms to decommission. The IRA has stated many times that if the British government does not move toward a peaceful transition to a united Ireland, with all troops out and all weapons put aside, they will never turn in their arms."

On the question of other youth movements internationally, Carthy explained that SFY works closely with Jarrai, the youth organization of Herri Batasuna, the main po-

litical party fighting for Basque independence from Spain and France. SFY and Jarrai have sent delegations to the Basque Country and Ireland to learn more about each other's national liberation struggles. Eoin O Broin said that in addition to Jarrai, Sinn Féin Youth have met with an Ogoni group from Nigeria and sent a representative to Cairo earlier this year for a meeting of the World Federation of Democratic Youth.

Conference marks further progress

This conference marked another step in the building of Sinn Féin Youth. Since forming last August, SFY have held three national conferences, including this one and a couple educational weekends. Sinn Féin Youth grew out of the advances made by the nationalist movement over the past half a decade and the growing need for an organization capable of drawing in young people looking to fight for independence. It formed out of the attempts to launch and build Glór na nOG, a predecessor of SFY, in 1996 and out of collaboration with the Basque organization Jarrai.

Niall O Murchú, the National Development Officer of SFY, explained that the leadership is focusing on consolidating functioning local groups in Northern Ireland and in Dublin. "Although this has been our focus, we have been quite surprised by the interest we've found throughout Ireland," O Murchú

said.

"New groups keep forming. Most of our members are in their teens and are not members of the party. SFY gives them an opportunity to check out and get involved in the republican movement, with whatever amount of time they want to commit."

In an interview after the conference, Martin, who asked that his last name not be used, explained what his group in Leitrim is organizing over the summer. The Leitrim group formed two weeks before the conference. "We plan on mobilizing for the marching season much more than nationalists did last year. In the south, many people do not know the truth about these triumphalist marches, but more are finding out."

Martin was referring to parades organized by the Orange Order and other rightist organizations that favor maintaining the union of Northern Ireland with Britain. Many of these supremacist, anti-Catholic marches go through Catholic neighborhoods in an attempt to intimidate supporters of a united Ireland.

In addition to mobilizing young people to protest the Orange marches, SFY are launching a protest campaign of actions against the harassment and arrests of Sinn Féin Youth activists. More than 30 people have been arrested and many others are receiving harassing phone calls by the Royal Ulster Constabulary in the North and the Garda Special Branch in the South.

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Ireland
and the
Irish Question

PROGRESS PUBLICATIONS

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SELL THE BOOKS WORKERS OF THE WORLD NEED

Join the campaign to sell Pathfinder books and pamphlets

Commercial bookstores in Seattle snap up titles from Pathfinder Press

BY JEFF HAMILL

SEATTLE—A week-long Pathfinder sales trip to Seattle, Bellingham, Portland, and other parts of the Pacific Northwest reaped good results here May 2-8. The goal of the trip by Pathfinder business manager Sara Lobman was to help give a boost to the efforts of workers and youth in the area who want to help make Pathfinder's books on revolutionary politics available in as many bookstores and libraries as possible.

Ten local Pathfinder supporters accompanied Lobman as sales teams at different points during the week, meeting with buyers at 22 bookstores and libraries. The sales teams also met with professors at three colleges and universities to urge them to utilize Pathfinder titles in their classes. In addition to the volunteers from Seattle, a volunteer in Portland set up four appointments there. Seven bookstores placed orders on the spot for a total of 89 books.

The most frequently ordered title was the Pathfinder edition of *The Communist Manifesto* with an introduction by Bolshevik leader Leon Trotsky. This is the 150th anniversary of the *Manifesto*, which was written by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels in 1848.

Four stores ordered a total of eight copies of the pamphlet. "Thank you for showing me your edition," one buyer said. "These have been selling like hotcakes." This same store had several copies of Pathfinder's *An Action Program to Confront the Coming Economic Crisis* prominently displayed. Several professors commented on the attractive cover and readable type of Pathfinder's *Manifesto*. Books on the labor movement were popular. Orders included 3 copies of *The Changing Face of U.S. Politics: Working-Class Politics and the Trade Unions* by Jack Barnes, as well as copies of *Trade Unions in the Epoch of Imperialist Decay* by Marx and Leon Trotsky, *Teamster Rebel-*

lion by Farrell Dobbs, and *American Labor Struggles: 1877-1934* by Samuel Yellen. The buyer at one community college bookstore, who ordered several of these titles, noted that the workers at the school have a strong union and that many of the students work full-time before and after class.

Eighteen of the 89 books ordered were related to the Cuban revolution. These included four copies each of *Che Guevara Speaks*, *Pombo: a Man of Che's 'guerrilla'*, and *To Speak the Truth: Why Washington's 'Cold War' against Cuba Doesn't End* were ordered. Four copies of *John Coltrane and the Jazz Revolution of the 1960s* and three of *Black Music*, *White Business*, both by Frank Kofsky, were ordered.

Five of the bookstores were ordering Pathfinder books for the first time. Several buyers noted how useful it was to have local representatives who were knowledgeable about the books available to help them think out orders on a regular basis. "You'll be my local sales guy, right?" one buyer said to Seattle Pathfinder volunteer John Naubert after placing an order for 18 books.



Pathfinder supporters in Detroit held a Militant Labor Forum May 29 celebrating 150 years of working-class struggle since the writing of *The Communist Manifesto*. Bill Schmidt, a member of the Young Socialists, spoke on the 1848 revolutions in Europe and the historical background to the *Manifesto*. Socialist meatpacker Holly Harkness also spoke. "This is a pamphlet that six or seven years ago some predicted would just disappear. Yet *The Communist Manifesto* was Pathfinder's top seller in 1997," she said. "And here in Detroit we've sold 13 copies already this year. Supporters of Pathfinder always take a couple of the *Manifesto* out on literature tables."

Sales of Pathfinder Books to Non-Pathfinder Outlets

APRIL

City/Country	Goals	April Sold	%	March	Feb.	Jan.
UNITED STATES						
Chicago	60	73	122%	27%	183%	207%
Los Angeles	95	105	111%	113%	353%	113%
Miami	42	37	88%	14%	0%	157%
Houston	32	22	69%	0%	3%	56%
Twin Cities	67	32	48%	10%	0%	6%
San Francisco	74	35	47%	893%	54%	73%
Washington, D.C.	42	19	45%	48%	145%	176%
Birmingham	50	17	34%	0%	68%	68%
Detroit	60	15	25%	0%	2%	2%
Boston	50	11	22%	86%	132%	358%
Atlanta	32	6	19%	16%	0%	475%
Seattle	60	9	15%	148%	38%	135%
New York	190	20	11%	7%	50%	155%
Des Moines	35	2	6%	6%	49%	57%
Newark	133	3	2%	2%	7%	29%
Philadelphia	55	1	2%	27%	2%	164%
Cleveland	40	0	0%	123%	13%	78%
Pittsburgh	49	0	0%	33%	6%	131%
U.S. total	1166	407	35%	90%	69%	123%
CANADA						
Toronto	60	24	40%	37%	73%	240%
Montreal	41	6	15%	7%	17%	27%
Vancouver	35	5	14%	9%	20%	6%
Canada total	136	35	26%	43%	115%	

Socialist in Houston wins ballot status for Congress

BY PAUL DUNN

HOUSTON — Supporters of Lea Sherman, Socialist Workers candidate for U.S. representative in the 29th Congressional District, were notified May 20 that Sherman's name will appear on the ballot in the November election. Sherman is an aerospace worker and member of the International Association of Machinists.

More than 1,100 signatures were turned over to the secretary of state May 14 to place her name on the ballot, far exceeding the 500 required. The signatures were collected in this predominantly working-class and Latino district where large numbers of oil refinery

workers live.

Sherman has actively campaigned on the picket line of the locked-out Crown refinery workers, as well as at the Anheuser-Busch plant gate where unionists turned down a concession contract and had a practice picket session for strike preparation. Supporters of the campaign distributed campaign literature at the plant gate, selling 25 copies of the *Militant* newspaper on two occasions.

Sherman has also aggressively used her campaign to speak out against the death penalty in Texas where more executions have been carried out than in any other state.

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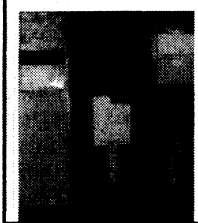
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YS chapters surpass national fund drive goals

This column is written and edited by the Young Socialists (YS), an international organization of young workers, students, and other youth fighting for socialism. For more information about the YS write to: Young Socialists, 1573 N. Milwaukee, P.O. Box #478, Chicago, Ill. 60622. Tel: (773) 772-0551. Compuserve: 105162,605

BY SARAH KATZ

CHICAGO — Nationally, the Young Socialists raised a total of \$5,779 through its six-week spring fund drive, which ended May 31. This surpassed the national goal of \$5,200 by more than \$500. Virtually every

chapter of the Young Socialists was successful in collecting funds through organizing political events that both raised money and drew young fighters closer to them.

"It was through consistent efforts around a few well-planned events that the Seattle chapter of the Young Socialists was able to meet and surpass its goal for the YS National Fund Drive," wrote Kate Porter. "We kicked off the fund drive by arranging for YS leader Jack Willey to speak at two local college campuses as part of his West Coast tour. Selling raffle tickets in preparation for our main fund-raising event on May 16, allowed us to steadily bring in money through the middle of the drive."

Porter said the event included a presentation of the documentary *Cuba and Angola*, a used book sale, and the raffle drawing. "The fund drive has put the chapter on a better footing for the work of regularly raising money to cover our weekly expenses," she added, "and organizing events that attract more young people to the YS."

The Seattle chapter has already scheduled a June movie showing of *The Battle of Algiers*, about the Algerian revolution of the 1960s.

YS member Ryan Lewis from New York said, "Through intensified efforts toward collecting pledges and organizing fund-raising activities over the past two weeks, we raised \$847, surpassing our local goal of \$800."

"The highlight of our planned activities was the May 22 forum at the Pathfinder Bookstore in Brooklyn titled, 'Ours is the Epoch of Revolution.' Andy Terranova, an Irish freedom struggle activist who had attended the World Youth Festival this

past year in Havana, and Joshua Carroll, a leader of the Young Socialists, spoke at the event," Lewis added. "The two panelists sparked a lively discussion about the openings that exist today for revolutionary minded youth to step up and broaden our involvement in working-class and anti-imperialist struggles."

Terranova spoke of his personal experiences in Northern Ireland, and on a Sinn Fein Youth solidarity delegation to the Basque Country. He explained the close ties between the Irish and Basque struggles, and pointed to some of the political lessons learned by Irish nationalists from the fighting example of the ANC-led movement against apartheid in South Africa.

Carroll pointed to the noticeable increase in working-class resistance here in the United States, and linked it with the stepped up resistance around the world of working people and youth.

Through collecting pledges at the event, drawing a raffle for prizes donated to the YS, and selling used books on a side table, the YS collected more than \$500 that evening. "We also collected contributions from a number of young people who are not currently members, but are interested in the Young Socialists," Lewis stated.

The goal of the chapter during the drive was to broaden the reach of the YS, bring potential recruits closer to joining, and work more closely with other political forces active in the fight against oppression. "Coming out of this work, one young person asked how she can join the Young Socialists," Lewis concluded.

"On Memorial Day, supporters of the

Young Socialists gathered for a picnic and fund-raiser on the Miami beach to raise money for the national YS fund drive," wrote YS member Chad Reeser.

Two Haitians came to the picnic site when they recognized Lavarice Caudin a Haitian activist. They also recognized Rolande Girard, who had spoken at a rally for immigrant rights as a Socialist Workers Party candidate in last fall's elections. They asked for more information and to be contacted about the YS. "We raised a total of \$90 for the fund drive," Reeser said.

In Los Angeles, YS members Heather Martin and Carlos Hernández wrote, "The YS here organized a forum on 'Building a Revolutionary Youth Movement Worldwide' on May 29 and raised more than \$200 for the fund drive." Martin participated in a panel that included Olga Russi, a Puerto Rican *independentista*.

"Russi discussed the historical roots of the present conditions that increasingly propel young Puerto Rican fighters to the forefront in resisting colonial domination," Martin said, and "I spoke about the economic crisis unfolding in Indonesia and the crisis of imperialism worldwide."

The discussion following the presentations covered a range of topics including the emerging student struggle against the implementation of Proposition 209, which seeks to eliminate affirmative action in California. Martin also pointed to the importance of building an organization like the Young Socialists for the coming battles, where youth will continue to be at the forefront with other fighters against the injustices of the capitalist system.

Young Socialists Fund Drive April 17 - May 31			
CITY	GOAL	PAID	%
Boston	150	223	149%
Seattle *	400	513	128%
Los Angeles	350	421	120%
Twin Cities, MN	250	291	116%
Newark	350	398	114%
Pittsburgh	550	623	113%
Washington, D.C.	250	280	112%
Chicago *	1,000	1,118	112%
Des Moines	200	215	108%
Miami	200	215	108%
New York	800	848	106%
San Francisco/ Santa Cruz	150	157	105%
Birmingham	200	204	102%
Philadelphia	200	201	101%
Houston	300		0%
Atlanta		24	
Other		48	
U.S. total	5,350	5,779	108%
Goal/Should be	5,200	5,200	100%
* Raised goal			

Students in London occupy building to protest budget cuts

BY PAMELA HOLMES
AND JONATHAN SILBERMAN

LONDON — Students at the University of East London (UEL) have been occupying the administration building since the third week in May in protest against £2.4 million (\$3.9 million) in cuts being carried out by the college authorities.

"The cuts will have very serious consequences," a student representative, who asked that her name not be used, said in an interview. "Altogether 80 jobs will go, including teaching, librarian and ancillary staff. Two of the five language teachers are being axed, as are the only mathematics and nursing teachers. Land surveying and economics courses will seriously suffer. According to the authorities, mathematics and land surveying show 'no potential for growth.'"

"Nine library staff are being made redundant. Both part-time doctors at the two college health centers will be laid off, leaving just one full-time nurse to deal with all our health needs. There are 10,000 students at the college. 'In addition the students' union grant is being cut by £13,000.'"

According to university officials, the cuts are necessary due to government-imposed cash limits. Another factor cited is that due to the economic crisis in Asia, the authorities anticipate a decline in the enrollment next year from students from southeast Asia, a significant source of college income.

"The management treats the college as a business," explained another student representative, who also asked that her name not be used. "UEL is opening two major business centers financed by big business. The cuts are part of a policy of privatizing higher education, something else we're totally opposed to. Educational, not business, needs should determine the university's priorities."

The students started their action May 18 following an Emergency General Meeting of the students called by the Students Union. About 40 students stayed over that night in the George Brooker teaching building. Since then the action steadily grew: 200 occupied the building the next night and about 1,000 students demonstrated their support for the action in various ways two days later when the students extended their action to the administration building. About 100 students

staged a noisy protest outside a meeting of the board of governors.

The students have received the support of the teaching staff. A meeting of the local teaching union, the National Association of Teachers in Further and Higher Education (NATFHE) on May 20 voted full support for the occupation, not to cross the students' picket lines, and to take steps to ensure that no students be penalized for taking the action. The students have established a special liaison committee with teaching staff to ensure that education continues.

The college authorities have served the students with a High Court injunction for their removal and police were called to remove student pickets. Meanwhile, the authorities have closed the library. In response to a similar shutdown of the campus creche (day-care center), the students have established their own child-care provision.

At a meeting of the occupying students on May 21 the students voted unanimously to inform other students, through a campaign of leaflets and posters, of their desire to maintain education and library facilities during the occupation, anticipating such a move from the authorities. Following the library closure the students made arrangements with a nearby university, Queen Mary and Westfield College, that East London students be permitted to use their libraries.

Mass meetings of students have been held three times a day to determine the conduct of the occupation. The students have gone out to win support for their action from the local community, who have access to some of the college facilities, including by leafleting a local carnival, and have sent delegations to win support from students at other colleges. They have made use of the multinational character of the student body to translate their flyers into different languages, faxing and e-mailing news of their action across Europe and beyond. They sent a message of support to the students in Indonesia.

Messages of support can be faxed to 44-181-597 6987.

Pamela Holmes is a member of the Amalgamated Engineering and Electrical Union. Jonathan Silberman is a member of the Transport and General Workers Union.



Militant/Brian Taylor

May 28 pickets in New York chant, "Grand jury, FBI—U.S. justice is a lie!"

Protesters demand: 'End grand jury harassment of Puerto Rican activists'

BY JOSHUA CARROLL

CHICAGO — Some 60 people rallied at the downtown Federal Building here May 28 against Washington's latest attack on the Puerto Rican independence movement. Pro-independence activists Juan Marcos Vilar and Ruben Rivera were subpoenaed to testify before a federal grand jury as part of an "investigation" into the 1992 bombing of a military recruitment facility in Chicago. The U.S. government is trying to link the bombing to Puerto Rican *independentistas*.

Vilar is the national coordinator of the National Committee to Free Puerto Rican Prisoners of War and Political Prisoners. José López, director of the Puerto Rican Cultural Center in Chicago, addressed the crowd. He explained that "the grand jury is being used by the FBI to carry out a fishing expedition against the Puerto Rican independence movement," adding that "this is intended to cause a chilling affect on the Puerto Rican community." Melinda Power, Rivera's lawyer, announced that she and Vilar's lawyer had filed motions to quash the subpoenas and to disclose electronic surveillance that they believe had been gathered against the two activists, and that they had been granted an extension to present their arguments.

Rev. Paul Jakes, leader of the Greater Chicago Committee Against Police Brutality, and Mervin Mendez, director of the

Committee in Solidarity with José Solís, also addressed the crowd. Solís, a professor at the University of Puerto Rico and an independence activist, is currently fighting Washington's attempt to frame him up for the 1992 bombing. Vilar said he does not intend to answer any questions from the grand jury.

♦

BRIAN TAYLOR

NEW YORK — The same day in New York, the National Committee to Free Puerto Rican Prisoners of War and Political Prisoners organized a picket line against the victimization of Vilar and Rivera. "Grand Jury, FBI — U.S. justice is a lie!" and "100 years of colonization, and Puerto Rico is still a nation!" were among the chants that rang out near Federal Plaza.

Christopher Torres, a 22-year-old student at Lehman College, joined the picket "to display my outrage against the grand jury scare tactic the [U.S.] government has used against *independentistas* for decades." Ana López, a leader of the group sponsoring the picket, said the so-called investigation was aimed against the efforts to build the July 25 national demonstration in Washington, D.C., demanding self-determination for Puerto Rico and the release of Puerto Rican political prisoners being held in U.S. jails.

Ottawa feeds anti-Quebecois chauvinism

Bigoted reaction to hospital appointment shows coarsening of capitalist politics

BY JOE YOUNG

MONTREAL — The May 1 appointment of a former Parti Quebecois (PQ) candidate, David Levine, to head the newly amalgamated Ottawa Hospital has been met with an outpouring of anti-Quebecois chauvinism.

Ottawa, the capital city of Canada, is located just across the river from Quebec, where about 80 percent of the population is composed of the oppressed Quebecois nationality. In 1995 a referendum for Quebec sovereignty was defeated by less than 1 percent.

Levine, an anglophone, was a candidate in 1979 for the PQ, a nationalist capitalist party, and was recently chosen as the Quebec government's agent general in New York. The PQ, which advocates sovereignty for Quebec, heads the Quebec government.

On May 19 about 500 people, most of them older than 60 years, attended a meeting with the hospital's board of directors to discuss the appointment of Levine. Some people in the crowd shouted, "Levine is a traitor" and "Levine to the morgue." People speaking in favor of the appointment were drowned out by singing of *O Canada*, Canada's national anthem, and insults.

The May 20 *Ottawa Citizen* quoted the comments at the meeting of Wade Wallace, director of a Canadian unity group called Solidarité Outaouais Solidarity in West Quebec, "Levine should be fired, whatever the cost. It's time these people paid the cost for their political choice." According to the *Ottawa Citizen*, Roger Hull, one of the participants, exclaimed, "This is an avowed separatist. We should not give this person the time of day, let alone a \$300,000-a-year job. We should no longer be polite to these bastards."

The *Toronto Star* quoted Tara Barclay as saying, "It is my understanding that Mr. Levine got his amalgamation expertise by closing English hospitals in Quebec and removing English signage in the French hospitals, thereby complying with Quebec's Bill 101, a bill that abuses the English-speaking citizens of Quebec." Law 101, adopted in 1977, promotes the use of the French language in Quebec. It is a tool to counter decades-long discrimination against the Quebecois on the basis of their language in employment, education, health care, and other areas.

Media whips up campaign

The anti-Quebec campaign has been whipped up by local newspapers and radio stations. After Levine's appointment was confirmed by the hospital board on May 21, the editorial director of the *Ottawa Citizen*, John Robson, wrote "If English Canadians are finally angry enough at the separatists that they begin to denounce them noisily...it is not only understandable it is justifiable."

Major political figures, as well as newspapers and radio stations, have fueled the chauvinist flames. In fact, the reaction is a product of the anti-Quebec campaign that has been carried out by the Canadian ruling class and its spokespeople since they nearly lost the 1995 referendum. The reaction to the Levine appointment is one sign of a growing coarsening of anti-Quebecois sentiment in Canada.

Stéphane Dion, the Intergovernmental Affairs minister in the federal government, characterized the chauvinist outpouring as "deplorable but understandable." He added,

"Secession is the kind of phenomenon which exposes the most tolerant of populations to intolerance." The day after the meeting in Ottawa, Ontario premier Michael Harris said, "I think we all prefer that people who are paid with public funds be in favor of national unity."

Other commentators have defended the appointment of Levine. This reflects above all their concern that the outpouring in Ottawa will fuel independence sentiment in Quebec. In a May 22 editorial entitled, "Free-speech alert," the *Montreal Gazette* wrote, "The truce that has existed in Canada since the razor-thin victory of the No forces in the 1995 referendum is not an easy one. Nothing was resolved by that vote. Bad feelings still smolder beneath a veneer of tolerance. Respect for civil rights and free speech rest precariously on the quicksand of public opinion."

The overwhelming public response in Quebec has been anger at the treatment that Levine has received because he has been associated with Quebec sovereignty. The Quebec National Assembly voted unanimously to denounce the effort to get rid of Levine.

Another reflection of the coarsening of the anti-Quebec campaign was the election of William Johnson to lead Alliance Quebec, the so-called English rights organization, at its May 30 convention. Since its creation in 1981, Alliance Quebec has centered its fire on Law 101. Anglophones in Quebec continue to be a privileged minority with higher wages and better social services. The idea that they are oppressed by

Law 101 has been central to Ottawa's campaign to confuse working people about the fight for Quebecois rights.

Johnson, described as "Pit Bill" Johnson because of his strident anti-Quebecois stance, is an advocate of partition, that is, of the breakup of Quebec should it become independent. He wants to abolish Law 101. In his effort to unseat the incumbent, Constance Middleton-Hope, he won the majority of delegates from the Montreal region.

According to Hubert Bauch, writing in

the *Gazette*, "Johnson, who has been flaying Quebec's moderate anglo establishment in general and Alliance Quebec in particular as 'the lamb lobby' in his columns for the past decade, wants the organization to be more politically militant and unyielding in defense of anglophone interests and in opposition to the separatist movement."

Joe Young is a member of United Steelworkers Local 7625 in Laval, just north of Montreal.

500 protest ultraright attacks in Germany



About 500 people demonstrated in Solingen, Germany, May 30 on the fifth anniversary of a racist attack there in which five immigrants from Turkey were killed. The large banner reads, "Fight Neofascism and racism — equal rights for all"; the smaller one, "Never Forget Solingen."

Rightist assaults on immigrants in Denmark mark class polarization

BY GEORGE WHITE

COPENHAGEN, Denmark — In the Folehaven district in the south of this city, ultrarightist attacks against immigrants have escalated. These attacks register the polarization that has sharpened in Denmark as class tensions heat up in the wake of a two-week general strike of 500,000 workers that shut down much of the country.

A number of residents of Folehaven, home to many immigrants from the Balkans and the Middle East, described to the *Militant* the daily harassment they face from the ultrarightist thugs and skinheads. Raja Zahoor, an immigrant worker originally from Pakistan, said that five or so years ago this type of intimidation did not exist in the

neighborhood." The nazis go after the people of color first, then they go after the Danes," he explained.

Zahoor described how these thugs — many of whom live in the neighborhood — hang out in the local park and intimidate immigrants. "They come with their pitbull dogs and terrorize people. They unleashed one of their dogs to attack an eight-year-old just recently," said Zahoor. "This comes from their ignorance and from the government. They gave me a Danish passport but they didn't give me Danish rights. But you have to talk and you have to keep fighting."

Raja Tab, another Pakistani who lives in Folehaven, told of crosses being burnt at a nearby school, as well as a front door to the apartment of an immigrant family. "Things have been getting worse. A lot of people are moving. We have families and young children to take care of," he said. Tab is moving to another neighborhood in the next week. He also told us of a local shopkeeper who had been assaulted at gunpoint and beaten because he was married to an immigrant from Thailand.

"We have called the police many times," Tab explained angrily, "but they just issue warnings to the nazis when we are attacked and nothing changes."

According to a report in *Politiken*, a national Danish daily, these attacks have intimidated residents in the neighborhood to the point where some will not leave their homes after 5:00 p.m. Many other immigrant families keep their back doors locked in the summertime. The article says these thugs have served as bodyguards for Jonni Hansen, a leader of the Danish National Socialist Party, an openly pro-nazi formation.

A hotel worker from Afghanistan, who

requested his name not be used, and who has lived in Denmark for 6 years, told of discrimination when he visited the unemployment office. "When there's a choice between a native-born worker and myself, they give the job to a Dane. And even if I get a job, you can be sure that I will get the one with the worst hours," he said.

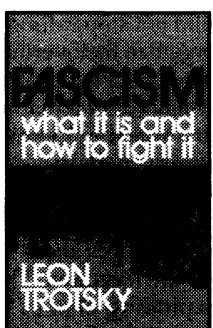
This worker said there was no union at his hotel and that, as a result, he hadn't participated in the general strike. "Perhaps the strike will help and people will see that we are all workers, all human beings. But I'm not so sure."

Newspapers in Birkerød, a city to the north of Copenhagen, reported that the local offices of the SID, the national union of semiskilled and unskilled workers, were severely damaged on May 2 by arson during the general strike. While no direct links to ultrarightist forces have been proven, local police speculated that the arson was tied to forces opposed to the union.

In the recent vote to approve the Amsterdam Treaty, the latest attempt to cobble together the shaky European Union, both the organized "Yes" and "No" campaigns resorted to demagogic anti-immigrant appeals. This has emboldened the skinheads and ultrarightists. At the same time, protests against anti-immigrant violence are being seen in Denmark, such as a demonstration last August in Roskilde, when 1,000 people marched against a public commemoration of nazi leader Rudolph Hess by a group of 140 fascists.

Lars Erlandsson, a member of the Food Workers Union in Stockholm, Sweden, and Anita Östling, a member of the Transport Workers Union, contributed to this article.

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Indonesia 1965-66: lessons of the defeat

Subordination by Stalinists to national bourgeoisie paved way for slaughter

To provide a better understanding of the events unfolding in Indonesia today, we reprint below two articles, published in the weekly socialist magazine *World Outlook*, on the events that unfolded there in 1965-66, when the working class internationally suffered its worst defeat since the fascist victory in Germany in 1933. The first article was written in the Oct. 15, 1965, issue, immediately following the military coup in Indonesia that led to a slaughter of half a million people. The second was written in the March 18, 1966, issue, after Gen. Suharto deposed President Sukarno and began his 32-year-long dictatorial rule. *World Outlook*, which can be obtained on microfilm in some libraries, was edited at the time by Socialist Workers Party leader Joseph Hansen. The subheads have been added by the *Militant*.

The Indonesian revolution has suffered a grave setback. The bourgeois army, while still maintaining Sukarno in nominal power, has taken over control and launched a nationwide witch-hunt. Communist party members are being hounded and arrested. Communist party papers are being suppressed, its leaders forced underground.

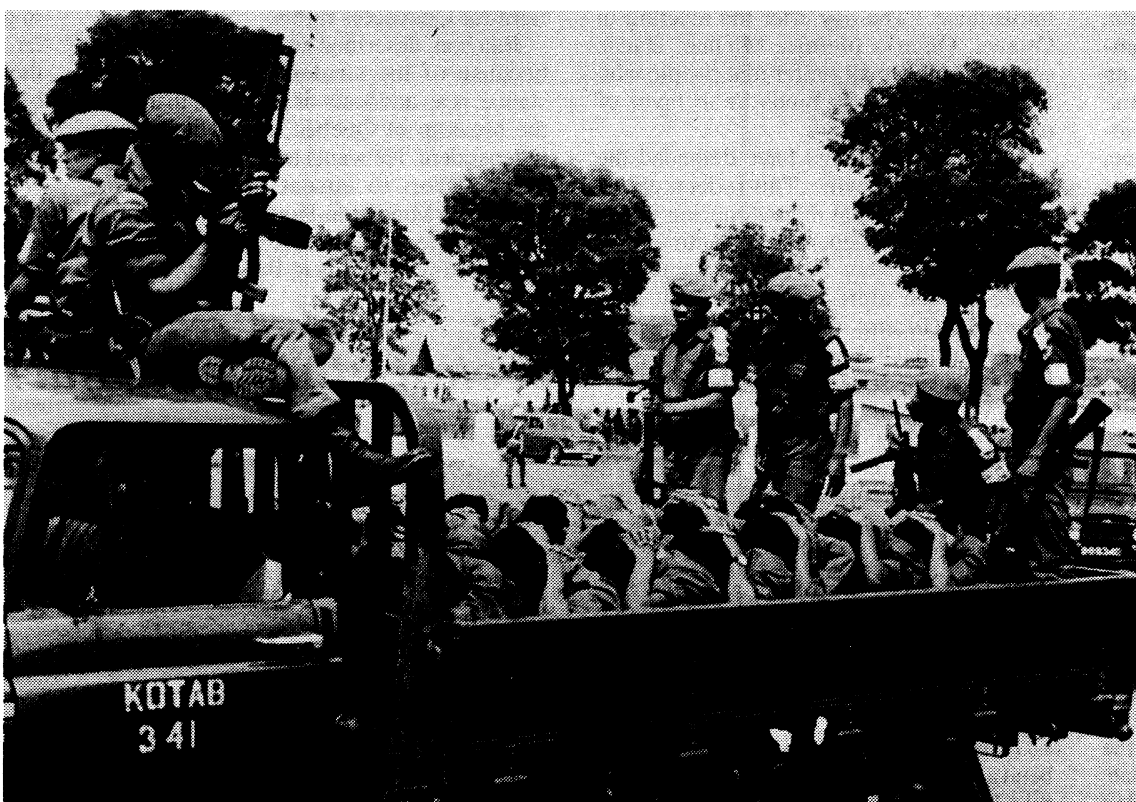
The brunt of this stinging defeat has been suffered by the biggest Communist party in the capitalist world. It claims 3,000,000 regular members, a People's Youth wing of 3,000,000, and a following of 20,000,000 in mass organizations of the workers, peasants, women, students and people working for the government. How could such a massive political force undergo a mauling at the hands of armed forces totaling 350,000?

CP bloc with 'national bourgeoisie'

It is due to the strategic line of "revolution by stages," of forming blocs and coalitions with the "national bourgeoisie." The Stalinist-educated leadership of the Communist movement in the colonial and semicolonial countries has applied this line again and again since the second Chinese revolution of 1925-27, notwithstanding its tragic results.

In Indonesia, the masses have surged forward repeatedly. Industrial and agricultural wage earners and poor peasants have occupied factories and plantations, seized the holdings of the big land owners, and poured into the streets in great throngs urging a decisive struggle against inflation, exploitation and imperialism. Several times the situation has been propitious for a government of the workers and poor peasants to take power.

But each time, the leadership of the Indonesian Communist party, headed by the group of Chairman D.N. Aidit, has put the brakes on the mass movement and held the masses prisoner to "Nasakom" — the "national front" of the three main political groupings, the Sukarno Nationalists, the Re-



Cops in Jakarta, Indonesia, detain Communist Party youth in October 1965 after military coup. The CP's policy of forming bloc with 'national bourgeoisie' disarmed workers and led to bloody defeat.

ligious Teachers, a Moslem group, and the Communist Party.

Each time the masses surged forward, the Communist party sought to channel their militancy against the single target of foreign imperialism, failing to organize systematic, nationwide struggles against the semifeudal landowners, the money lenders, rich merchants, and corrupt administrators of enterprises that serve as seed beds of a new industrialist bourgeois class.

In this way the fighting energy of the masses was not concentrated on the central task of winning power, but was split up and dispersed into numerous partial actions.

Meanwhile the bourgeois army, the center of the counterrevolutionary forces, quietly strengthened by American imperialism and beefed up with shipments of armaments sent by the Soviet bureaucracy, sought to increase its popularity and its political standing by staging easy "successes" against imperialism, as in West Irian and North Kalimantan, biding its time to turn against the revolutionary mass movement.

It is true that in recent months the Aidit leadership made a shift to the left, radicalizing its orientation somewhat. Aidit even called for arming of the workers and peasants.

But he did not call upon the masses to arm themselves. He asked Sukarno to arm them. Sukarno, of course, gave this appeal the brush off.

Finally, on September 25, only a few days before the attempted coup of the "September 30 Movement" which precipitated the present situation, Aidit told the masses to act boldly against the "bureaucratic capitalists," and to take control of the former imperialist enterprises which had been confis-

cated or nationalized.

The shift came too late. "Bung (Brother) Karno" cannot be praised day in and day out without sowing immense confusion among the masses and disorienting them in the problem of winning power. It is impossible to remain silent year after year about the reactionary danger represented by the army without paving the way for the masses to be taken by surprise when the reactionary generals finally decide that the time has come to strike.

Workers left leaderless in face of coup

The hesitant and wavering attitude of the Aidit leadership stood out starkly during the decisive week of the army coup. Not a single appeal, not a single indication of what to do, not a single list of slogans of action was issued by the Indonesian Communist party to the masses of workers and peasants. They were left leaderless in face of the enemy. Confused by the contradictions in past policies, abandoned by their leaders in the hour of greatest peril, they stood stunned as the generals brought the sword down.

The role played by the left-wing army officers under Lt. Col. Untung is not yet clear. It is possible that these officers, informed about the impending coup being prepared by the reactionary generals, sought desperately to throw it off balance by striking first. It is also possible that they actually tried to topple the Sukarno regime through a purely military conspiracy which General Abdul Haris Nasution then seized as a pretext for his own coup.

If the latter hypothesis proves to be the correct one, then it must be listed as a putschist adventure in which a handful of resolute men attempted to substitute for the power of the masses. It is quite wrong to think that an attempted coup d'état by reactionary generals cannot be blocked by a strong mass movement or that putschists can succeed whereas the masses are doomed to failure. There are many examples in history where powerful mass mobilization supported by relatively weak popular military formations, have successfully blocked reactionary army circles from taking over a country. This occurred at the time of the attempted Kapp putsch in Germany in 1920. It happened again in Spain in July 1936. The latest instance was in the Dominican Republic.

The best response is a powerful general strike which paralyzes the enemy, throws him into confusion, forces him to divide and dissipate his forces, giving the labor movement a breathing spell in which to arm the workers and peasants and thereby prepare a truly effective counterblow against the reactionary threat.

But the responsibility for the Untung putsch — if it turns out to have been a putsch — must be laid squarely on the Aidit leadership. It is the old pattern: opportunism breeds adventurism. It is probable that

inside the Indonesian Communist party, a left wing became more and more impatient with the wavering, opportunist policies of the Aidit leadership. Under pressure of the constantly rising tension between classes and political forces in recent months, certain elements in this left wing might very well have thought of turning to direct action as a possible way out. Feeling that a reactionary coup d'état could occur at any time, they might have despaired of convincing the party cadres and members of the danger before it was too late. Miseducated as to the real potential of mass action, lacking confidence in their capacity to mobilize the masses — if necessary against the Aidit leadership — they might have thought that the situation could be saved through some kind of short cut.

Chinese leadership's responsibility

Whatever the facts — and these are not easy to determine as yet — the opportunism of the Aidit leadership stands at the center of the setback dealt to the Indonesian revolution. And the leadership of the Chinese Communist party and the pro-Mao tendency in the world Communist movement likewise bear heavy co-responsibility.

In several documents, the Chinese Communist party leadership has correctly criticized the opportunist policy of the Thorez and Togliatti leaderships in the French and Italian Communist parties, the servile subservience to the "national" bourgeoisie which led the Iraqi Communist party and the Dange leadership of the Indian Communist party to heavy defeats.

But in gross contradiction to these criticisms, the Mao leadership placed a rubber stamp of approval on the opportunist policies of the Aidit group inside the Indonesian Communist party.

This course was linked to the diplomatic maneuvers with which the Chinese government sought to counter the blockade of American imperialism and the hostile moves of the Soviet bureaucracy against the Chinese revolution. To seek friendly relations with bourgeois governments like those headed by Sukarno or Ayub Khan in Pakistan is not at all wrong in and of itself. A workers state has a perfect right and even duty to seek to maneuver among its bourgeois enemies and to take advantage of their differences. The Soviet government in the days of Lenin and Trotsky did this at the time of the Rapallo treaty.

What is impermissible — it is one of the products of Stalinist miseducation and degeneration — is to identify the needs and prerogatives of the government of a workers state with the political needs of the world revolution which are expressed on a party level. To confuse the two, converts the party into a mere instrument of the government with its passing diplomatic needs and tears the heart and brains out of Marxist political policy. Even Marxist theory becomes reduced to the role of apologizing for each twist and turn in the field of governmental diplomacy.

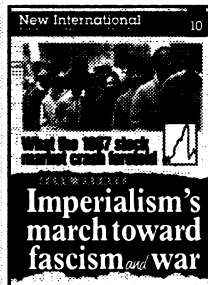
Thus when the Soviet government in the time of Lenin and Trotsky signed a temporary pact at Rapallo with German imperialism against "Allied" imperialism, the Communist International did not stop calling for and seeking to help organize the overthrow of German imperialism through a proletarian revolution. The Communist International did not stop calling the rulers of Germany what they actually were — ferocious capitalist exploiters of their own workers.

But in Mao's deals with Sukarno and Ayub Khan, all the radical words about "uninterrupted revolution" are forgotten. These representatives of exploiting classes and butchers of striking workers are pictured as "progressive national leaders." A veil is drawn over the class nature of their regimes; debilitating illusions are sown about the possibility of creating a "bloc of newly emerging forces" against world imperialism.

This opportunist policy is not fundamen-

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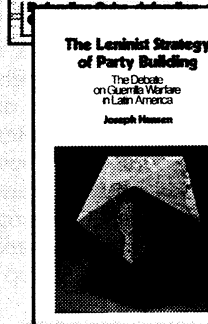


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Eyewitness report from Indonesia

Continued from front page

eral elections," he said, adding that they should be soon, not way down the road as the government is suggesting. "We don't know what will happen in the next few years. We have to use this moment" to push for more rights, he added.

'Peaceful reform' versus 'total reform'

"Reform" and an end to "corruption, collusion, and nepotism" have become official slogans in this country. The words "peaceful reform" appear on banners adorning offices and other buildings everywhere. The government of President B.J. Habibie — an aerospace boss who was Suharto's vice president before May 21 — is taking pains to present an image of democratic change.

Habibie announced May 29 that new elections would be held "sometime next year" — a shift from his vow a week earlier to hang on to the presidency until the end of Suharto's original term in 2003. Suharto, who had controlled the Indonesian government since 1965, was forced to resign when mounting student protests, which began to draw in workers and others, convinced Washington and growing layers of the Indonesian bourgeoisie that he could no longer maintain stable rule.

In addition to promising elections at least six months down the road, Attorney General Soedjono Atmonegoro said the government will carry out an investigation into corruption under the Suharto regime, but will not specifically target the former president. Deputy Attorney General Ismudjoko argued, "What is most important is that we should always maintain national unity."

Student leaders and other opposition groups reject Habibie's long time frame as simply stalling on democratic elections. "Reformasi total" (total reform) is a popular slogan on student banners, as are calls for bringing Suharto to trial. A few calls to "Hang Suharto" are still written on the walls near universities here. While estimates vary, Suharto, his family, and his close associates acquired billions of dollars in assets during Suharto's 32-year reign.

Speaking to a gathering of 10,000 students from several cities at the Institute of Agriculture in Bogor, West Java, May 31, Amien Rais called for giving Habibie a chance to take steps to repair the economy. Rais, who is one of the main bourgeois opposition leaders, said he wanted rapid elections. Lt. Gen. Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, the armed forces chief of sociopolitical affairs, said he agreed, but suggested it might take more than six months to put laws in place to hold democratic elections.

Only three parties were allowed under Suharto's "New Order" regime — the ruling Golkar party, the United Development Party, and the Indonesian Democratic Party. The latter two never ran candidates for president. The Golkar party is now starting to break up. The official trade union and women's organizations associated with it announced at the end of May they were breaking away from that party, and on June 2 a group of senior party members called for the resignation of Golkar chairman Harmoko.

Rais also called for Indonesians to "forgive" Suharto. "Even though there were so many negative sides to his administration, it's undeniable that he has done the country a great service during his 32-year rule," Rais said in answer to a student's question. He suggested that Suharto should voluntarily turn over most of his wealth to the state, to be used instead of loans from the IMF.

General Suharto came to power in 1966 after organizing a coup and a slaughter over the following months of more than 500,000 workers and farmers.

Megawati Sukarnoputri, another major bourgeois opposition politician, who had remained largely silent during the anti-Suharto protests, also called for restraint by protesters for the supposed good of the nation. "No matter how he behaved, [Suharto] was still the country's second president," she said June 1. Sukarnoputri is the daughter of Sukarno, the country's first president following independence from Dutch rule until his overthrow by Suharto.

Her words were echoed the next day by Bishop Dili Carlos Felipe Ximenes Belo, who is known as a critic of the government's repression of the independence struggle in East Timor, which is occupied by Indonesian troops. "I ask for respect for a man who has done the country a great service," he declared.

But many of the fighters who led the protests against Suharto are not accepting the government shuffle and are pressing for more political space. Banners condemning the Suharto regime are still hanging at Gazebo park across the street from the provincial parliament and the West Java governor's office in Bandung. They have been there since May 20, when organizers proudly say that some 300,000 workers, students, and others turned out to demand Suharto resign. That day is celebrated annually as the start of the fight for Indonesian independence from Dutch colonialism.

Military guards are permanently stationed in front of the parliament today. But according to political activists here they have been more restrained since May 21. One estimate from students here put the number of political prisoners in Indonesia at 1,000, but no one knows the exact number. Only a handful have been released to date.

Students in Bandung who are active in the National Resistance of Students of East Timor (Renatil) told the *Militant* that the military had killed five people in East Timor in a new massacre the previous week. One student activist, Armando, said they would be part of a demonstration in Jakarta June 11 to press for a referendum on self-determination in East Timor and for the release of East Timorese leader Xanana Gusmao and other political prisoners. "Now is the right time to build opposition to the new government," he said.

Habibie declared June 1 that there would be no shift in the government's policy in East Timor.

One indication of the push for greater political space has been the investigation of the death of Second Lt. Dadang Rusmana, a cop in Bogor, near the capital. Indonesian authorities claimed the police officer was stoned to death in early May, and several students had been arrested. But an autopsy report released June 1 asserted that Dadang had in fact died of a heart attack. Faced with this discrepancy, a government official claimed three students had confessed to the killing and reenacted it for police in prison. The Legal Aid Institute in Jakarta is calling for the police to release the three students.

Economic crisis

Everyone here speaks of events in terms of before and after "the crisis" — the sharp economic drop that was triggered in July 1997 by the wave of currency devaluations in southeast Asia. In the 10 months since, the Indonesian currency, the rupiah, has plunged about 80 percent against the U.S. dollar, making imported goods extremely expensive. Soaring interest rates and a massive foreign debt that is supposed to be repaid in dollars or Japanese yen have crippled much of the banking and industry in the country, with a real wearing effect on the lives of working people.

Figures released by the Central Bureau of Statistics June 1 showed an 8.5 percent drop in Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in the first quarter of 1998, compared to a year before. This includes a 27 percent drop in construction and an 18.6 percent decline in manufacturing. At the same time, prices rose by another 5 percent in May, bringing inflation for the first five months of the year to an annual rate of 40 percent. The official estimate today is that the Indonesian economy will shrink 10 percent this year; other economists say the drop in GDP will be double that amount.



June 1 demonstration of students outside the U.S. embassy in Jakarta against austerity measures the International Monetary Fund demands in exchange for a \$43 billion loan package.

The same day, Sempati Air, one of six domestic commercial airlines, announced it was suspending operations because of the economic crisis. All 700 workers will be laid off. This is down from the 1996 peak of employment at Sempati of 3,500 workers.

The impact on working people is clear in this city of 2 million people, the third-largest city in Indonesia. These reporters visited Majalaya, an industrial district just south of the city, June 2. Of the roughly 50,000 textile workers employed in the area before the crisis, about 40 percent have been laid off. At same time, real wages have gone down sharply.

Didih, a 28-year-old machine operator at the Makmur Abadi Family textile plant, said that before the crisis his weekly pay was around 43,000 rupiahs (about \$17.50). This was based on production rates of 1,000 meters of cloth a week, at 40 rp (rupiahs) per meter. It's impossible to meet that target now because the machines are in bad repair, he said, and most workers average about 600 meters of cloth each week. Demands for a pay raise to compensate only succeeded in raising the rate to 44 rp per meter — still a big pay cut. Didih's wife Iim, who is 27, works at another textile mill, taking home less than 34,000 rupiahs each week.

Before July 1997, the rupiah traded at 2,450 to the U.S. dollar. Today the exchange rate is about 11,000 to the dollar. That means the price for imported goods, including basic necessities, has skyrocketed. Didih said a kilogram of rice that had sold for 1,000–1,500 rp now costs 1,700–2,000 rp, and the prices of other food items have increased as well. He estimated their family spends at least 7,000 rp per day for basic foods — more than half their income. Monthly expenses include 8,000 rp for electricity and a 1,000 rp fee for village security.

Their thatched-walled house is built on land owned by Didih's father, who works in the neighboring rice fields for a landlord. Other groups of workers rent rooms that go for about 40,000 rupiahs per month.

Many of the textile plants in this area have been built since 1990. Before the crisis began in mid-1997, there were spontaneous strikes over wages and working conditions in one plant or another practically every week, said Asep Haris, 29. The economic crisis has had a dampening effect, though.

"Many of the organizers have been dismissed," said Mamad, another textile worker. These include Mamad, who was fired for raising complaints about overtime pay, and Haris, who was laid off along with half the workforce at the P.T. HBS textile plant about six months ago after the boss ran out of raw materials. The laid-off workers at that plant received full pay for three months, but are now getting only half their wages from the company.

The military would regularly come to the plant to intervene in strikes, workers said. "Maybe in the post-Suharto era there will be more possibilities," said Mamad. Four

workers from Majalaya were among a delegation of 10 from Bandung who participated in the June 1 protest at the Ministry of Manpower office in Jakarta.

IMF extends its deadline for austerity

Hubert Neiss, the head of the International Monetary Fund's (IMF) Asia office, said May 30 that the economic situation in Indonesia was worse than earlier estimates and suggested the IMF would push back the deadlines it had set for the government to impose austerity measures in exchange for a \$43 billion loan package. The IMF acts for the biggest imperialist banks from the United States, Japan, and elsewhere in their attempt to stabilize their investments, extract more wealth from Indonesia, and open the door for foreign capitalists to buy up more Indonesian banks and industry. Suharto's attempt to impose one of the IMF strictures — a cut in fuel subsidies that would have raised prices 70 percent — sparked the chain of protests that led to his resignation.

While suggesting the October 1 deadline for ending subsidies could be extended, however, Neiss offered no fundamental shift in the IMF guidelines, and did not set a date for resuming payments of the promised loans. He returned to the IMF headquarters in Washington after five days in Indonesia, where he said a decision would be made.

"We need economic and political change. Why do what the IMF says? Why do the [university] rector and the government, who say they support reform, have no response to the economic conditions we face?" declared a student standing at the microphone as these reporters arrived at the Pasudan University campus in Bandung June 1. He spoke to passing students under banners opposing the Suharto regime and calling for political reform and the recovery of Suharto's wealth. After the soapboxing, a group of students gathered to watch a theater piece accusing Suharto of crimes against

Continued on Page 14

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Edited by Doug Jenness

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Philadelphia transit workers walk out

Continued from front page

to City Hall, where they held a rally. Later that afternoon, barred from protesting on federal property, strikers picketed across the street from the Liberty Bell, where Rendell was hobnobbing with visiting politicians.

Angry strikers chanted "No contract, no peace," "Local 234: ready for war," and "Ed Rendell, Go to Hell!"

The next day at 5:00 a.m., unionists set up picket lines outside the bus barn in Upper Darby from where SEPTA operates its suburban Victory-Red Arrow division. Red Arrow's 280 drivers are members of United Transportation Union Local 1594. They approved a separate contract with SEPTA in April. But Victory-Red Arrow mechanics are TWU members who are now on strike.

SEPTA immediately sought and received a court injunction against the TWU limiting the size of its picket lines and barring any attempts to block Victory-Red Arrow service.

Strikers continued their protests the night of June 2 at the Franklin Institute, where Rendell and other administration officials were again wining and dining other capitalist politicians. To military cadence, they chanted, "Ed Rendell is going down, Philly is a labor town!"

SEPTA bosses, the Rendell administration, and the big-business media immediately launched a high-pitched campaign

aimed at isolating the strike in public opinion and dealing heavy blows to the TWU.

High-pitched campaign against union

SEPTA published a full-page "Dear Rider" advertisement June 2 in the city's big-business dailies. "We regret that you have become the innocent victim of this strike and appreciate your patience and support as we work for resolution," the ad begins. "You are walking today because the Transport Workers Union Local 234 rejected a contract framework designed to help modernize your system while at the same time improve pay and retirement benefits for our employees."

SEPTA claims its final offer "would have been enthusiastically embraced by union members" had the TWU leadership permitted them to vote on it. "It is a shame," the ad says, "that the TWU chose to shut down the City Transit Division and idle nearly a half million riders rather than agree to help create a drug-free workplace, reform a Workers' Compensation system run amok, and work rules that now stifle productivity and escalate operating costs."

The day before, SEPTA spokesperson Stephan Rosen complained that "the people that are going to get hurt the most here once again are the 40 percent of households in Philadelphia that don't own a car."

In a June 2 front-page article, the *Philadelphia Inquirer* echoed this propaganda: "About 31,000 city residents — people recently removed from welfare rolls after getting jobs or training to leave public assistance — felt the strike's effects keenly. In addition, the city's elderly, who account for about 50,000 rides a day, were suddenly immobile."

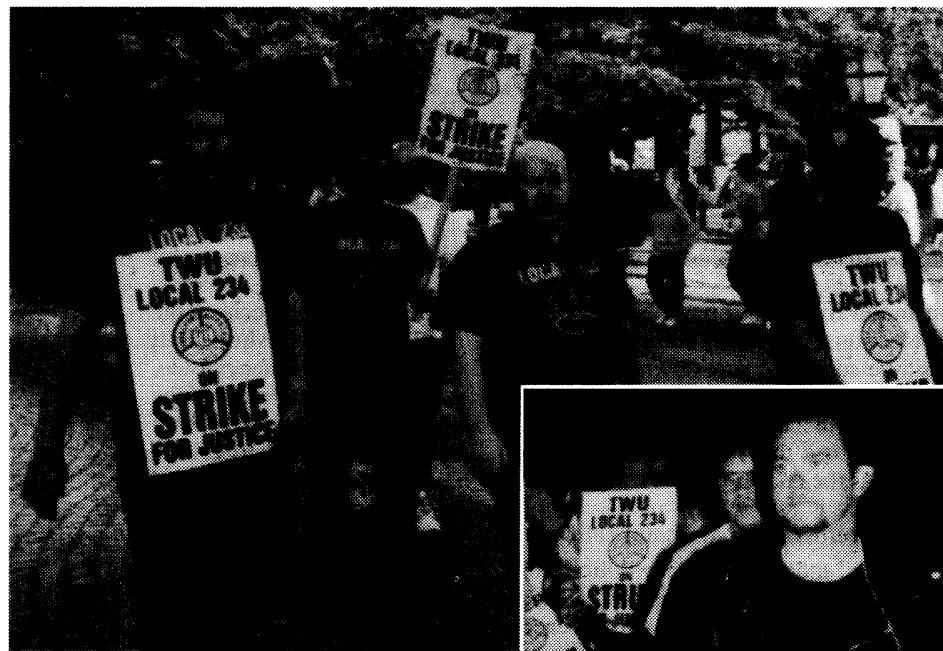
In the lead editorial the same day, the *Inquirer* complained of "less-than-convincing union grievances" and warned that a long strike might "bite workers whose future depends on the region's financial health and SEPTA's ridership support." The editors concluded that while "workers might get some public sympathy for their fears of a major shift to part-time help.... union leaders can't count on public support for a long strike if they refuse to budge on antiquated work rules while sniffing at a decent wage package."

Striking workers on the picket lines and at the rallies were confident, well-informed, and assertive in explaining the scope of the attack on workers' rights that SEPTA's "final" contract would really mean.

Attempt to extend two-tier wage system

Ed Finegan, with 12 years as an underground power maintenance worker, blasted SEPTA's attempt to deepen divisions by starting new workers at 60 percent of top pay. Finegan explained that "when I got hired in 1986 it took me 36 months to reach full rate. Now SEPTA wants to extend that to eight years."

Finegan also criticized SEPTA's proposal to bring in part-time workers. He opposed



Militant Photos/Pete Seidman

Striking transit workers in Philadelphia have shut down SEPTA.

making any worker a "second-class citizen."

Kevin Hower, a mechanic with 12 years' service, was costumed in a prison uniform and dragging a plastic ball and chain, carrying a poster with highlighted clippings from SEPTA's rejected proposal. Hower explained that under the guise of "reforming" workers compensation, SEPTA is demanding the right to fire a worker who has been off after an on-the-job injury for more than six months.

SEPTA officials repeatedly speak to the media about alleged workers comp cheats and "malingers and deadbeats." But several workers told the *Militant* about serious accidents caused by the dangerous working conditions and antiquated equipment they are forced to use. Mark Crupi, a track maintenance worker whose leg was crushed by a 1,300-pound rail, was out of work for nine months.

Hower explained that SEPTA wants the right to "sublet any work or service or use volunteers, employees of private businesses, or other governmental agencies to perform any SEPTA work."

'Management rights' vs. union rights

Local 234 vice president Jean Alexander has been a trolley driver for 21 years. She blasted SEPTA's proposed new "zero tolerance drug policy." "The federal law already specifies an unacceptable level for drugs and alcohol. Who is SEPTA to set a lower standard? If you use mouthwash, two hours later you'd flunk. Even if you belch from a drink the night before you could flunk! We don't condone operators using drugs or driving drunk. No. But drivers in sensitive jobs are already randomly tested. SEPTA now wants to extend this to everyone and with no second chance."

Strikers also objected to the new "management rights" clause in SEPTA's proposed contract. The clause says "SEPTA would be

free to assign work to any employee in any manner it decides, shut down any work, routes, depots, or operations; to subcontract any work or services; and take whatever action it decides is in the best interest of the Authority."

Workers said the onus for this strike was fully on SEPTA. They worked for two and a half months without a new contract to see if SEPTA would budge, but the employer refused.

Nancy Cole, the Socialist Workers candidate for U.S. Congress in Philadelphia's First District, launched her campaign by joining the TWU's protests on the first day of the strike. Cole, a member of the International Association of Machinists at USAirways, said that "the stakes in this battle are high for working people throughout this country. Despite their hypocritical claims to defend the interests of workers and the Black community, the fare-raisers and service-cutters in the Rendell administration and SEPTA are actually out to gut public transportation." To do this, they need to deal a blow to the union, she noted.

"My campaign calls for maximum solidarity with these workers who are standing up for all of us!" the socialist candidate declared.

Pete Seidman is a member of the United Auto Workers. Rebecca Arenson, a member of the International Association of Machinists, contributed to this article.

Miners won't cross tow boat picket line

BY JEANNE FITZMAURICE

BIRMINGHAM, Alabama — Coal miners at the Shoal Creek mine honored a picket line set up by Pilots Agree, an organization of tow boat pilots. Members of the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) refused to mine coal on May 1 and May 4 at the Drummond Co. underground mine in west Jefferson County, Alabama.

About 700 members of Pilots Agree walked out April 3 demanding better working conditions and pay.

After UMWA members refused to cross the picket line for a second day, the Drummond Co. forced the barge workers to take down their pickets by getting an injunction through the National Labor Relations Board and the federal district court in Atlanta. Miners then returned to work.

Opened in 1994 the Shoal Creek mine has 650 union miners. Coal from the mine is shipped on barges — as many as 16 a day — on the Black Warrior River.

Jeanne FitzMaurice is a member of United Steelworkers of America Local 1013 in Fairfield, Alabama.

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BY TOM MAILER

Des Moines, Iowa — As the fifth week of the strike at Titan Tire opened here, picket lines remain up and all 650 members of United Steelworkers of America (USWA) Local 164 remain out. Since May 26 one bus has entered the plant every morning with about 30 replacement workers. The strike began May 1 when contract negotiations failed to resolve differences over mandatory overtime, retiree benefits, elimination of a two-tier wage scale, and job security. Titan Tire is the third-largest manufacturer of agricultural and construction tires in the United States.

The Titan bosses are using the DICO plant in Des Moines as a base for dispatching the replacement workers. The history of this plant under Titan illustrates the operating methods of its owner. Titan International, the parent company of Titan Tire, purchased DICO, a wheel-making plant, in 1993. Maurice Taylor Jr., chief executive officer of Titan, immediately forced concessions on the union there and gained an "economic incentive package" from state and local authorities worth more than \$1 million. In return, he agreed to keep the plant running. By March of 1995, he had closed the plant.

The strikers have begun to respond to this threat by organizing rallies at an intersection near the DICO plant, which all the replacement workers have to drive by. As many as 60 strikers, family members, and supporters turned out May 28-29. On May 28, they massed in the street, blocking traffic for a time.

The next day the protesters were met by five security guards who attempted to provoke the unionists. Security goons holding video cameras walked up to protesters and put the camera in their faces. Pickets responded by surrounding the goon and holding their picket signs right in front of the camera lens.

As the scabs left the parking lot, they were met by jeering protesters on both sides of the street waving picket signs. The last car out was driven by Joyce Kain, personnel director at Titan Tire. A truck pulled up to block her departure and strikers converged on the car demanding to know why Titan wouldn't sign a contract. She was allowed to pass after a few minutes.

Negotiators exchanged information this past week, according to Local 164's hot line. Negotiations resumed June 1. The union held an informational meeting the next day to discuss future strategies.

Houston: locked-out oil workers fight frame-up by Crown

BY PATTI IYAMA

PASADENA, Texas — Members of the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers (OCAW) locked out by Crown Central Petroleum here have begun a public campaign to defend a group of their members facing frame-up charges by the company.

On May 29 about 35 people protested at the Federal Courthouse, where the first pre-trial hearing took place in a civil suit brought by Crown against the unionists. Fourteen locked-out Crown workers, the secretary-treasurer of the local union, and the union itself — Local 4-227 of the OCAW — are charged by Crown with sabotage and conspiracy to commit sabotage.

The Crown workers walked as a group into the courtroom wearing red T-shirts emblazoned "Locked out by Crown — us today, you tomorrow." They were joined by a small number of unionists from the Lyondell-Citgo refinery and Shell Oil refinery, also organized by the OCAW; from the Anheuser-Busch plant organized by the Teamsters; and from the post office, members of the American Postal Workers Union. After the hearing, a brief impromptu rally was held on the steps of the courthouse.

In the days leading up to the hearing, teams of locked-out Crown workers reached out to other unionists for support.

Six workers visited the Anheuser-Busch brewery at shift change, where they received a warm welcome from the brewery workers who are in the midst of heated, drawn-out contract negotiations. Another group leafleted maintenance workers at the Lyondell-Citgo refinery. OCAW members there are facing demands for concessions similar to those rejected by workers at Crown. Later, a Crown activist spoke to 75 Lyondell-Citgo workers at their regular union meeting. Another team of locked-out workers attended a rally of postal workers protesting the privatization of priority mail.

On Feb. 5, 1996, managers of Crown Central Petroleum refinery just outside Pasadena, Texas, escorted members of the OCAW out of the plant and began running it with a combination of supervisors and scabs. Crown justified the lockout with al-

legations that union workers had committed acts of sabotage.

The FBI investigated these supposed acts of sabotage and filed no charges, despite dangling a \$60,000 reward from Crown.

The locked-out Crown workers refuse to give up. They continue to maintain a daily picket at the refinery. Crown's response was to file a lawsuit to make the union surrender.

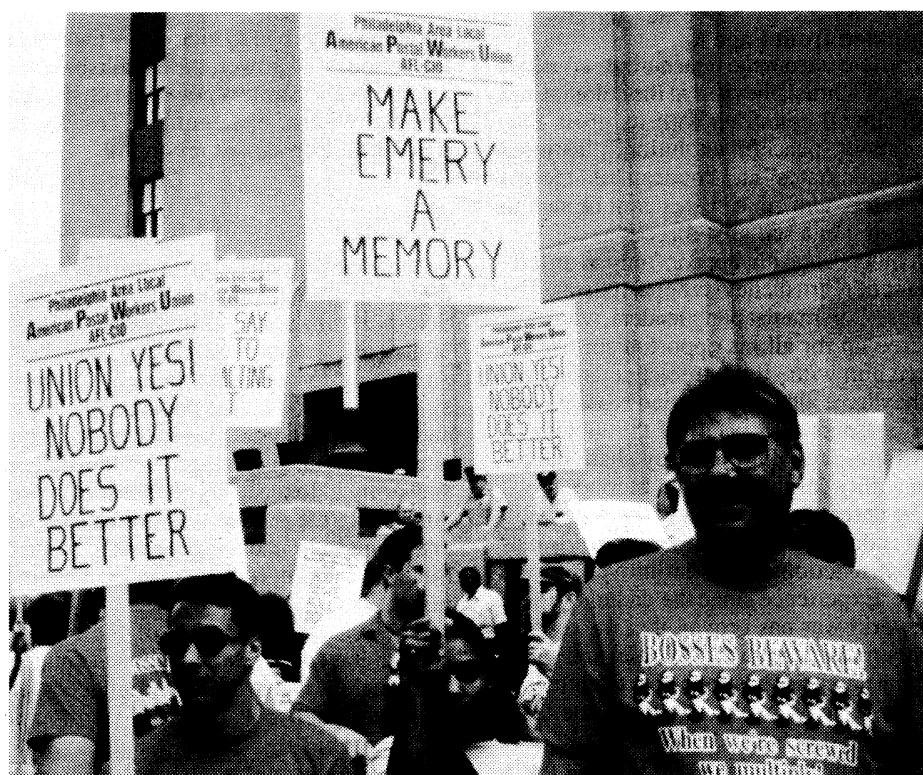
At the May 29 hearing, Federal District Court judge Lee Rosenthal gave Crown's high-priced attorneys the right to conduct a virtual "fishing expedition," authorizing them to take depositions from an unlimited number of people. The Crown attorneys stated that during the course of discovery they may well level additional charges against the defendants, as well as expand the list of unionists charged.

Before the hearing, workers mounted a steady campaign to get out the truth about the frame-up charges and the continued lockout. Most notable was the union's participation in the annual Strawberry Festival held in Pasadena, a working-class community on the outskirts of Houston dominated by refineries and chemical plants. Some 80 locked-out workers and their supporters marched behind a float in the Strawberry Festival Parade on May 9, carrying picket signs and hand-lettered posters denouncing the frame-up. The float was dominated by "Crownosaurus," a large dinosaur piñata, representing the threefold increase in toxic releases since the lockout began. Marchers were greeted by sustained applause from those watching the parade.

The next weekend locked-out Crown workers sponsored a booth at the Pasadena Strawberry Festival Fair where they gathered more than 400 hundred signatures on an "Open Letter" to the chairman of Crown Central protesting the frame-up and demanding that the company end the lockout.

"I think it was awesome," said Richard Kimes, a defendant in the lawsuit who originally proposed participating in the Strawberry Festival. "The public support we had overwhelmed me. I hadn't realized how much people in the community back us."

Postal workers say 'No' to nonunion outsourcing



Militant/Roy Inglee

The American Postal Workers Union (APWU) coordinated nationwide protests May 27 against the U.S. Postal Service, which is trying to contract out priority mail to Emery Worldwide Airlines, a nonunion outfit. In Boston more than 500 unionists from all over the region turned out. The Boston-area APWU local made T-shirts printed with the demand: "Fair Pricing and Service, Not Wall St. Profits" and handed them out to participants. "If they take this what's next?" asked Arlene Corriveau, president of the APWU local in Portsmouth, New Hampshire. APWU members said they will "be out here many more times" to fight for their union. Protesters in Philadelphia (shown above) rallied at the main post office.

Public defense of the framed-up oil workers has also begun to get attention nationally. Dean Cook, one of the locked-out

Crown workers, was invited to participate in the OCAW Chemical Sector Conference, a meeting of delegates from OCAW locals representing workers in the chemical industry. "It gave me a chance to tell about the lawsuit to workers around the country, both rank and file and staff," he reported. "And we collected \$1,200 in addition to selling 40 T-shirts. Some delegates took Open Letters home with them and already sent them back, asking for more."

The international OCAW has continued its corporate campaign to boycott Crown gasoline, flying several locked-out workers to confront the annual stockholders meeting in Baltimore on April 23.

Shareholders rejected the unionists' motions to block a big bonus and pay increase

for Crown Chairman Henry Rosenberg. An article in the *Baltimore Sun* on the shareholders meeting also gave prominent mention to the lawsuit.

"David Arnold, another worker, recalled giving Rosenberg a United Way medal for philanthropy. Now, he said, the company was accusing him in a lawsuit of trying to sabotage the Pasadena refinery. 'The real conspiracy was committed by the Crown management,' he said."

The locked-out workers at Crown have established a Web page. The address is: <http://nwwin.com/~ocaw4227>.

Patti Iiyama is an operator at Lyondell-Citgo Refinery and a member of OCAW Local 4-227. Jerry Freiwirth, an operator at Shell Oil Refinery and member of OCAW Local 4-367, contributed to this article.

Puerto Rico telephone workers protest sell-off

Continued from front page

members of the Independent Union of Telephone Employees (UIET), which organizes the workers at the PRTC, or the Independent Brotherhood of Telephone Employees, which organizes professionals such as engineers and accountants. A small number of other unions, such the waterworks union and

the teachers from the University of Puerto Rico, were also represented.

Demonstrators chanted, "Workers' rights cannot be sold for money." Another chant called for a 24-hour general strike. Last October 1 there had been a one-day general strike, including a march of 100,000 people, focused largely on opposition to the sell-off

of the phone company.

At a certain point the crowd swelled across to the north side of the avenue and closed it to traffic. About 20 cops mobilized and began shoving the demonstrators with their batons. The police had left their left flank open, and workers on the southern half of the avenue surged behind them. The police quickly stopped pushing people as they realized they were outnumbered 50-to-1 and could not move in any direction.

After a few minutes of tense negotiations the cops were allowed to retreat while the crowd chanted "Out! Out! Out!"

Wilma Colón, writing in *El Nuevo Día* noted, "More than a thousand employees achieved what is seldom achieved — the riot squad retreated from a boiling confrontation that for a few minutes appeared headed for the most serious consequences."

A few minutes later union monitors opened the avenue to traffic again, although the traffic jam lasted another hour. Before the marchers dispersed and returned to work, union officials called for a second protest at 5:00 p.m. The plan was to rally and then organize a caravan to the capitol to demand that the legislators veto the sale.

Sold to GTE

Late that afternoon, Rosselló went on television and announced that just over 50 percent of the PRTC stock would be sold to a private consortium led by the U.S. telecommunications giant GTE. A second member of the consortium is Banco Popular, the largest bank in Puerto Rico. Three percent of the stock would be given to the employees, who would have an option to buy another 3 percent. The remaining 44 percent would be allocated to the government employees' re-

tirement plan, which has liabilities that far exceed its assets. The sale price is \$1.87 billion, of which only \$375 million is in cash.

The PRTC is about \$700 million dollars in debt. About \$1 billion is supposed to be used to finance water supply projects. GTE is the third largest telephone company in the United States, with 94,000 employees. The international division of GTE has an additional 20,000 employees in the Dominican Republic, Venezuela, Argentina, Canada, and Europe.

Writing in the May 29 *El Nuevo Día*, Maribel Ferrer Gil and Mari Carmen Schell attacked the sale, saying that the government sold it too cheaply. They calculated that at a price of \$1,982 dollars per access line, this was a bargain compared to the \$3,300 per access line that was paid for Southwestern New England Telecommunications or the \$2,509 for Telefónica del Perú.

The planned sell-off of the phone company has generated widespread opposition in Puerto Rico over the past months. Many working people are opposed to the prospect of rate hikes and layoffs, and believe the new owners will ignore service in the mountainous rural areas. They are concerned this will lead to the sale of other state-run companies.

In last October's labor march, the four largest contingents were from the government-owned telephone, electricity, and water companies as well as the teachers.

On May 31 delegates of the UIET voted in a special meeting to call another 24-hour general strike, the date of which has yet to be determined.

Ron Richards is a member of the American Federation of Government Employees in San Juan.

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Indonesia 1965-66: lessons of the defeat

Continued from Page 8

tally different from the treacherous, revisionist line of Khrushchevism in the colonial and semicolonial countries with its gross illusions about "peaceful evolution," "national democratic states" and "noncapitalist forms of development" that still cannot be said to be moving in a socialist direction.

In Indonesia Aidit appears only as a "left" variant of Khrushchevist opportunism. The Chinese Communist party leaders, who have covered up for all his opportunism and invested him with all the tremendous authority they have among the Asian workers and poor peasants as a result of the victory of the Chinese revolution, today share the responsibility for the defeat in Indonesia.

The defeat in Indonesia will not prove to be an enduring one. An important battle was lost but reaction is not definitively in the saddle. Experience since the end of the second world war has proved that the revolutionary movement in the colonial and semicolonial countries has been able to quite rapidly forge again to the forefront after suffering partial defeats.

This recuperative power is due primarily to the objective conditions; i.e., the incapacity of neocolonialism and the national bourgeoisie to assure even temporary improvements in the abysmal living conditions of the millions upon millions of exploited colonial slaves.

These slaves are learning the power of revolt; and it takes more than a temporary defeat to force them back into numbed acceptance of an intolerable existence.

The 3,000,000 adult Communists, 3,000,000 Communist youth and 20,000,000 members of mass organizations in Indonesia have not been crushed. They are only temporarily thrown off balance and left leaderless. They are certain to rally, resume their struggle and compel reaction to retreat.

Their struggle will continue until the most conscious and critical Communist militants, united with the Indonesian Trotskyist cadres, forge a revolutionary party capable of leading the working class and peasantry

upon the only road to victory — the road to the conquest of power, the establishment of a workers and farmers government, the road of Fidel Castro, of Lenin and Trotsky, the road of the permanent revolution.

October 15, 1965



In what amounted to a military coup d'état March 12, General Suharto deposed Sukarno from power in Indonesia while retaining the former president as a figurehead. According to the Jakarta radio, Sukarno agreed to "transfer" his powers, thus in fact ending his "lifetime" presidency. A victory parade was at once staged by the Indonesian army in token of its conquest of power. And while the parade was going on, General Suharto issued a decree in the name of Sukarno banning the Indonesian Communist party.

The reactionary nature of the military coup d'état could scarcely be made plainer. Nonetheless the decree cited alleged "underground activities" by the Communist party, including "slander, aggravation, threats, rumors and armed activity..."

Blood purge

All the evidence now points to a renewed and intensified blood purge in the unhappy archipelago where estimates of the number of victims slaughtered either directly by the army or under its instigation run as high as 200,000 to 350,000.

Thus Sukarno's desperate attempt to redress the balance on which he formerly maintained power appears to have come to an end. On February 21, Sukarno, who already seemed to hold only a semblance of power, suddenly dismissed Nasution, the general who seized the reins of power on October 1 and initiated the massive witch-hunt for "Communists." Reports from Djakarta indicated that Sukarno had succeeded in splitting the generals.

With at least some power back in his hands, Sukarno sought to strengthen his left flank. He reshuffled his cabinet, bringing in figures opposed by the generals as "soft on

Communism. Among them were Foreign Minister Subandrio and Minister of Basic Education Sumardjo.

This maneuver had no chance, however, of finding forces on the left strong enough to counter the army. The Communist party was shattered as an organization during the months of blood-letting. The top leadership was smashed, Aidit himself having been executed according to a number of rumors that gained in credibility as time passed. Party cadres were physically liquidated by the tens of thousands. The mass murder terrorized millions of workers and peasants, for they were totally unprepared to defend themselves. Sukarno found nothing to lean on toward his left.

The generals meanwhile held a series of secret meetings, in which they composed at least their major differences. One of their decisions, evidently was to depose Sukarno.

Moreover, they blocked Sukarno's efforts to bring the purge to an end. There appears to have been some subsidence of the mass killings, but executions still went on. [See *World Outlook* March 11.] In addition, demonstrations against Sukarno, organized by reactionary student organizations around such slogans as getting rid of Subandrio and Sumardjo, were not opposed by the army. In fact they appeared to be covertly encouraged and even instigated by the officer caste.

In face of this renewed assault, Sukarno gave in, and now appears to have reached the final stage of his political career — a keeper of the rubberstamp for putting his name to decrees issued by the army. How long the generals will deem this to be a profitable game remains to be seen.

As for the imperialist reaction, this is sufficiently indicated by the March 13 *New*

York Times: "In Washington the Administration found it difficult to hide its delight with the events in Indonesia. Officials believed that both President Sukarno and the once-powerful Communist party had taken sharp setbacks."

Writing from Washington, *Times* correspondent Max Frankel stressed, the "delight" of the Johnson administration and indicated that the situation in Indonesia was the result of intervention in the internal affairs of that country:

"After a long period of patient diplomacy designed to help the army triumph over the Communists, and months of prudent silence while Mr. Sukarno appeared to be slipping, officials were elated to find their expectations being realized."

There appeared to be hope in Washington that General Nasution would yet emerge as the new "strongman" in Indonesia.

"The United States retained excellent contacts with the military leaders," Frankel revealed, "even after Mr. Sukarno had renounced American aid and had begun to move against American information libraries, the Peace Corps and news correspondents." Frankel added: "The Central Intelligence agency was known to have participated in some plots against him [Sukarno]. An American flier was captured by the Indonesians while flying for a rebel group."

Lessons of Sukarno's role

Of all the lessons to be drawn from the success of the counterrevolution in Indonesia, one of the most obvious is Sukarno's role. In 1961 he was reported to have told

Continued on Page 14

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Capitalist norms — Spain's jobless rate, the highest in the European Union, dipped below the 20 percent mark for the first time in six years. A headline in the *Financial*



Harry Ring

Times of London triumphantly declared: "Spanish Unemployment: Strong economic growth cuts jobless rate to 19.6%."

The can-do system — Last year, Union Pacific bought the Southern

Pacific railroad for \$3.9 billion and integrated it into its rail system. For nine months since, UP freight trains have been stalled in a humongous gridlock, costing shippers a bundle. Pressed for cash, UP now plans to sell its billion-a-year trucking business. It estimates it will take five years and \$1.4 billion to modernize and expand its rail system in the Texas-Louisiana area.

Defending the American Way — Amnesty International found "credible evidence" of wide-scale abuse of Mexican immigrants by the U.S. Immigration Service Border Patrol. Many of those held as possibly undocumented are subjected to beatings and sexual abuse,

and denied food, water, and medical care during detention periods.

No comment — "The Immigration and Naturalization Service now has more armed personnel than any other federal law enforcement agency." — News item.

Be well — A million Epi-Pen injection kits were recalled, creating an emergency for those subject to acute allergies from certain foods and insect bites. The kits contain syringes of medication that can be quickly injected. The recall came after finding batches with insufficient potency levels. The FDA said: "The best advice we can give consumers is to return to the pharmacy

and get a replacement if they can."

He's got a point — Commenting on the antitrust suits filed against Microsoft by 20 states and the feds, Larry Ellison at rival software, Oracle, opined that Microsoft prez Bill Gates "wants everybody to believe he's Edison, when he's really Rockefeller."

Gang-busters — A British Labour Party Crime and Disorder Bill was expected to include authorizing cops to pick up youth playing hooky from school and, if they refuse to go back, bust them. For us, it was a reminder of our high school days when we racked up an attendance record of about two days a week.

The joy of commodity fetishism — Homer Simpson loves his "Duff" beer and so many TV viewers love the Simpson series that an Australian brewer began selling a Duff beer. But the owners of the cartoon series went to court, ending production of the beer. Now some of those who were far-sighted, or lucky enough to stash away some Duff are selling them through classified ads, fetching as much as \$6,300 a case.

What's a commodity fetish? — For a cogent answer to an intriguing question, check out Karl Marx's *Capital*. Last section of the first chapter, Volume I.

France 1968: mass revolt by workers and students

Below we reprint excerpts of "Lessons of the French events" by George Novack, taken from *Revolt in France*. That booklet, which is out of print, is a compilation of articles from the *Militant* and the socialist news magazine *Intercontinental Press* on the massive social upheaval that erupted in France exactly 30 years ago, in May-June 1968. The individual articles can also be found in the 1968 bound volumes of these two publications.

BY GEORGE NOVACK

Truly awe-inspiring is the popular upheaval engulfing France these May days. Overnight, virtually without warning, the mass movement has risen up like a fiery volcano from beneath the ground, covering

BOOK OF THE WEEK

the length and breadth of the country with its lava flow. From the disturbed dignitaries high above to the participants down below, everyone has been astonished by the extent and elemental force of the outburst.

Wave upon wave of protest has rolled on to encompass every significant segment of French society apart from the ruling bourgeoisie. One layer of the people after another has responded "present" to the summons to demonstrate their discontent with de Gaulle's played-out authoritarian regime. The students gave the signal. After them came the workers. Then the state employees and small farmers fell into line behind them — and even the police unions have expressed sympathy with the strikers!

The general strike of ten out of fifteen million workers has paralyzed all sectors of the economy. It is the most massive, the most unanimous walkout in the history of the world working class. This magnificent mobilization is more than a general strike. It is the spontaneous outpouring of an entire nation, declaring in a single voice: "Ten years of Gaullism is more than enough; now things must change..."

What do the confrontations to date have to teach the young rebels — and remind their elders — about the cardinal issues of our time?

They have strikingly verified in life the basic tenets of revolutionary Marxism and the perspectives issuing from them.

The social crisis that has gripped France shows that all the major capitalist powers of this era are not so strong and stable nor so immune to shocks and convulsions as may appear. It further shows that the crucial question of which class will be master of society can be posed without the onset of a severe economic depression. On the eve of upheaval France was comparatively calm, prosperous, and free from entanglement in costly colonialist adventures.

Nevertheless, its social equilibrium turned out to be so precarious that it was upset by clashes between the authorities and students. It was as though the dislocation of a few pebbles let loose an avalanche. Indeed, the momentum of that land slide quickly exposed the underlying weakness of de Gaulle's government and the domination of the capitalist class. The myth that authoritarian regimes can indefinitely keep the workers housebroken was shattered. For all its mystique, concessions and repressions, ten years of Gaullism did not succeed in reconciling the working class to capitalism let

along breaking its will to resist. Once the opening presented itself, the antagonism of the toilers to the rule of the rich burst out with irresistible vigor....

What the shortsighted academicians failed to understand was that the passivity of the proletariat over the past two decades was not a permanent but a passing phase. After setbacks and disappointments, they needed time to reorient themselves and recharge their energies. Their revolutionary capacities were built up little by little until these could be transformed from a potential to an active state when the appropriate circumstances and occasion arrived.

The stalemate was broken through the initiative of the new generation of young workers and students who were not bowed down by the betrayals of the past twenty years or conservatized and depoliticized by economic prosperity....

The workers are obviously the dominant and decisive force in the present revolutionary offensive. But they are not the only element in active opposition. They were preceded by the students who were the first to challenge the state authorities and raise the banner of revolt. That honor cannot be taken from them by the "Stalinist creeps" at the head of the French CP who condemned the audacious initiative of the students and denounced their leaders.

The developments of the protest movement go far to clarify the controversy that has been conducted in many places over the relations and respective roles of the students and the workers in the struggle against capitalist power....

Marxists have consistently adhered to a dialectical conception of the interplay between the ranks of labor and other dissident elements like the students. This is based upon the inevitably irregular mode of development and readiness for action among the diverse participants in the anticapitalist struggle.

As a rule, the separate social forces do not come upon the arena of open combat all at once or en masse but one after the other and in successive detachments. In the revolutionizing process students, intellectuals, oppressed minorities, peasants, and other oppositional layers actuated by their own grievances, can set the ball rolling and take on the authorities before the mass of workers are ready or able to move. Their first steps, their encounters, their calls for support can spur the heavy battalions of labor into action on their own account.

That is precisely the kind of chain reaction that has taken place in France. What the students started set the stage for the entry of the workers. Younger workers were the link between the two sectors in the sequence of developments. In the early Latin Quarter demonstrations they came out to contact and aid the students, fought side by side with them against the cops, and then transmitted to their fellow workers in the factories the spirit of resistance and mood of solidarity against Gaullism. They acted as a conduit through which the workers became aligned with the students despite the reluctance of the union bureaucracy....

Between the workers and the prospects of power stand the cowardly and conservative leaderships of the traditional parties and union organizations.

Foremost among them are the heads of the Communist party. The full strength of its apparatus and influence has been flung into the breach to slow down and hold back the workers so that French capitalism can once more be protected and rescued from their socialist



Militant/Flax Hermes

March of 800,000 called by General Federation of Labor in Paris on May 29, 1968.

aspirations. The CP is trying to split the workers from the students.

The role of the CP is the most important political factor in the further evolution of the present revolutionary situation in France. In a desperate last ditch effort to preserve his Bonapartist functions, President de Gaulle has asked for a referendum in June to renew the national mandate for his personal rule.

To his request for full powers, the answer of any working-class leadership worthy of the name would be: "No power to the General or any other representative of the ruling class! All power to the workers! Forward to a Socialist Republic based on the workers, farmers and students committees!"

But nothing of the sort can be expected from the Stalinist betrayers. They have no intention of mobilizing the masses for an assault upon the bourgeois state or of expropriating big business. They envisage and propose nothing more than a shift from the extra-parliamentary rule of de Gaulle to the restoration of a bourgeois-democratic government. Under the aegis of the "Popular Front" Communist ministers are to help administer the affairs of state on behalf of a decaying capitalism in disregard of the welfare and wishes of the workers, just as they did in the French government from 1944 to 1947....

Although they have different ends in view, the Gaullists and Stalinists are each following a common strategy of gaining time. Both bank on letting the revolutionary ardor of the workers ooze away while they haggle over paltry reforms which can be whittled down or snatched back by the bosses and their government with the next turn of the tide....

May 26, 1968

— 25 AND 50 YEARS AGO —



June 15, 1973

Late in the evening of his inauguration May 25, Argentine President Héctor Cámpora announced a sweeping amnesty of all the country's political prisoners. Faced with determined crowds of tens of thousands of demonstrators who stormed prisons demanding the immediate release of the prisoners and with rebellions inside some prisons, he immediately declared a pardon for all political prisoners, declining to wait for the new Congress to approve an amnesty law the next day.

But what really forced Cámpora to grant a total amnesty, and to move up his timetable for doing so, was the events at Villa Devoto Prison in Buenos Aires, where many political prisoners were being held.

By late afternoon May 25, the first columns of demonstrators began arriving outside the prison. The prisoners in Cellblocks 2 and 3 had already rebelled and were in control of the situation on the inside. The Buenos Aires daily *La Opinión* gave the following account:

"In Cellblock 2, the common prisoners had set fire to bed sheets, blankets, and clothes, which they suspended through the bars of the windows. From the street a poster could be seen that announced 'Common

Prisoners Back the Guerrillas.'" The common prisoners asked only that their sentences be reduced, as is customary during the granting of amnesties.

"In Cellblock 3, which had been taken over by the guerrilla prisoners, the rioters could be seen through the windows of the three floors hailing the demonstrators who were gathering in the street.



June 14, 1948

While Hitler's barbarous uprooting of whole peoples in Europe is generally known to the public, not much attention has been paid to a similar black page in recent American history. This was the shameful forced evacuation of 120,000 persons of Japanese ancestry from the Pacific coast and Alaska in 1941.

While the uprooting of all the Japanese-Americans on the West Coast didn't serve the interests of military security, it did serve other interests. These were the interests that lined their pockets by stealing and swindling the property and savings of the deportees. The deportees left behind them about \$200,000,000 worth of real estate; personal property and commercial property. Most of that has been gobbled up by the 200% "Americans" who cloaked their robbery in patriotism.

Support SEPTA strikers

Working people everywhere should support the fight by 5,300 transit workers in Philadelphia to push back the city government's attempt to deal blows to the Transport Workers Union (TWU).

This fight is another example of the increasing numbers of working people in the United States and other countries who refuse to accept the bosses' demands for cutbacks and are willing to fight. They join the ranks of other workers who are or have recently been engaged in battles, such as the striking unionists at Titan Tire in Des Moines, and coal miners on strike in western Pennsylvania. This bubbling resistance by working people to the capitalist offensive is international, from the docks of Australia to the general strike that paralyzed Denmark.

These labor struggles are having an impact on broader layers of workers who want to stand up to the bosses' demands for "management rights" and other attempts to run roughshod over our wages, working conditions, and rights. Many working people can identify with the transit workers' opposition to the efforts to deepen the two-tier wage system and use more part-time work. In fighting for greater class solidarity, the transit workers show how all working people can defend our interests.

The wealthy class and their media are cranking up their propaganda to try to isolate the transit strikers. They cry crocodile tears over "innocent victims" of the strike, feigning sympathy for workers who rely on public transportation. But it's the city government that is trying to undermine public transportation by decreasing service, hiking fares, and slashing jobs. To accomplish this, the SEPTA bosses and the city administration must deal a debilitating blow to the transit workers union.

The *Militant* urges its readers to get out the truth about and win support for the Philadelphia transit strike by reaching out to working people in every city they live. This means discussing this fight on the job and in your union. Going with co-workers and rebel-minded youth to labor actions and other social struggles in your area. Taking the *Militant* to sell to workers at plant gates and elsewhere, especially at bus depots and transit barns. Fights like this one create more opportunities to present the revolutionary perspective in this newspaper and books published by Pathfinder, such as *The Changing Face of U.S. Politics*. Some will become interested in joining the socialist movement and the fight to get rid of the dog-eat-dog system of capitalism and create a world fit for humanity.

Prop 226 defeat: gain for labor

Trade union members and other working people in California and elsewhere scored a victory June 2 when reactionary ballot Proposition 226 was defeated by a 53 to 47 percent margin. The measure, dubbed "paycheck protection" by its big-business backers, was designed to substantially weaken the ability of trade unionists to participate in politics. Proposition 226 mandated that individual union members be required to sign letters authorizing their employer to send part of their dues checkoff to their unions before any portion of their union dues could be spent on elections or lobbying efforts. This procedure was designed to tie unions in fresh new balls of red tape.

The tide began to turn against the measure in the days leading up to the California vote. While the large advertising campaign mounted by the U.S. union officialdom against the measure undoubtedly had a big impact on the outcome, something more important was involved. Working people, including those beyond the ranks of the unions, began to smell in this measure deeper employer and government intrusion into the rights of the unions and their members. And they sensed that this attack on the unions was linked to the broader assaults on working people.

Capitalist elections provide a distorted snapshot of class politics. The California vote is no exception. In the United States today elections take place in the framework of contests between two capitalist parties over how to best manage the offensive against working people as part of positioning the employers' class to gain advantages over their counterparts in the other imperialist countries with whom they compete for raw materials and markets.

The trade union officialdom overwhelmingly focuses its electoral activities on trying to maintain influence inside the Democratic Party while occasionally backing a Republican. Millions of working people sit on the sideline during elections and don't vote. The same was true on June 2. But the California vote came at a time when working people on a world scale are accelerating their resistance to the broad-sided offensive by the bosses. This broadening of the working-class response to the capitalist crisis is being expressed on picket lines and through job actions from the McDonald's restaurants in Ohio, to the Appalachian coal fields, to the Titan Tire plant in Des Moines, Iowa. Workers are fighting against the manifestations of the offensive by the wealthy rulers that includes worsening working conditions, break-neck line speed,

imposition of longer hours, less days off, and cutbacks in medical coverage.

The California vote on Proposition 226 was for many working people an opportunity to take a stand against the profit drive by the billionaires. It will be understood this way by millions and should be saluted accordingly.

The union officialdom's stance on Prop 226 contrasts sharply with their effort on another California measure—Proposition 227. In this measure, which was adopted by a 61 to 39 percent margin, state-funded bilingual education programs are to be eliminated. The union officialdom paid lip service at best to being opposed to 227.

Backers of 227 pegged their efforts as aiding immigrants by teaching them English and improving schools. Publicity in support of the measure prominently featured Latino spokespeople. The backers of 227 got a hearing among working people, including tens of thousands of Latinos, because many immigrants see learning English as a road to getting a better job. In addition, they see few results emanating from schools where bilingual programs are in effect. But the problem is not bilingual education per se. Education under capitalism is designed to prepare working people for a life of toil in the mines, mills, and factories. Bilingual programs under capitalism are no exception. Measures like Proposition 227, rather than making anything better, will worsen discrimination if they are not resisted. They are designed to deal blows to the rights and confidence of the oppressed. The measure that was passed in California will now make teachers and school officials personally liable if they don't teach classes in English.

Two earlier California ballot measures, Proposition 187 in 1994 and 209 in 1996, also dealt blows to rights of immigrants and to affirmative action. Though both passed, the battle is far from over. Students at the University of California at Los Angeles, for example, have been holding protests in recent days in defense of affirmative action. A protracted battle over bilingual education — which was won in mass struggles in the 1960s and '70s — can now be expected. The actions of students like those at UCLA are showing the way forward to defend the rights of working people. The full weight of the labor movement needs to be mobilized to defend both affirmative action programs and advocate equal rights for immigrants.

The victory for workers registered in the defeat of Proposition 226 is a good omen.

Antilabor measure is rejected in California

Continued from front page

paigns. The measure aimed to forbid trade unions from using dues money for "political contributions" — for candidates, political parties, and ballot initiatives — without the written authorization of each member of a given union. The law would have drawn the employers and the government directly into the political and financial affairs of trade unions. Proposition 226 also contained a series of reactionary restrictions on campaign contributions from so-called "foreign nationals," including immigrant workers. The \$17 million public campaign waged by union officials against 226 rarely mentioned this section.

For months, polls indicated that Proposition 226 was widely backed, including among unionists and other workers. Over the past few weeks, however, support for the measure eroded as working people began to get a better picture of its meaning and who was promoting it.

A measure aimed at banning bilingual education programs in California public schools, Proposition 227, passed by a wide margin in the June 2 balloting. Under Proposi-

tion 227, bilingual programs would be shut down. Children deemed not proficient in English would be placed in one-year "immersion" courses in English, after which they would return to their studies at whatever grade level they were at. The measure would make any exception to this setup difficult to obtain, and it allows for lawsuits against teachers and school officials who use Spanish, Chinese, or other languages in their teaching.

The measure's supporters promoted 227 by saying it would ensure that immigrant children could learn English and therefore, have access to better jobs in future years. Its main sponsor, Ron Unz, a Silicon Valley software capitalist, tried to distance himself and the attack on bilingual education from open opponents of the rights of Latinos and immigrants. The measure gained 61 percent of the vote, including 37 percent of Latino voters surveyed by a CNN/Los Angeles Times exit poll. A lawsuit challenging 227 as a violation of the Constitution's equal protection guarantees as well as federal civil rights and education statutes was filed in federal court in San Francisco June 3.

Indonesia

Continued from Page 9

the Indonesian people.

Students said that of the 15,000 on this private campus, 13,000 took part in the May 20 protest at the provincial parliament, joining a march stretching almost two miles.

The role of the IMF was a topic of discussion when *Militant* reporters met with some of the activists in the Pasudan student press office. "We criticize the IMF policies and demand that the IMF not interfere, just deliver funds," said Dian Wiram, head of the campus press. "One day students will be against the IMF," she added, "but Indonesia is very weak today and the economic crisis is still very deep," so maybe the loans are necessary.

Other students said they thought the economy could repair itself if the corruption that marked the Suharto regime were ended. Ade Lulu of the Revolutionary Student Organization at Pasudan commented, "We realize the IMF's relationship is with Suharto, not the people."

This was also a discussion at a meeting that evening of the Bandung Student Presidium, with representatives involved in the struggle from different campuses. "We see the IMF as a new imperialism — a new intervention from a foreign country," said one student.

That meeting took place at the Bandung Economics Institute. Students there have erected a display in a courtyard near the entrance to the campus, including panels listing the companies owned by the Suharto family.

The centerpiece is a collection of photos from a demonstration they held on campus May 6 protesting the Suharto regime. Police attacked the action, which had drawn 1,500 students from several campuses, with clubs and tear gas. Two police clubs that had been used to beat a female demonstrator are part of the display. The battle had been a flashpoint in galvanizing the protest movement, as was the killing of six students by police in Jakarta May 12. Another collection of photos showed a mass march from the campus to the provincial parliament May 14.

Student protests are continuing across the country. Students in Ujungpandang, the capital of South Sulawesi, have occupied the legislative council building demanding the resignation of Gov. Z.B. Palauna. Eight hundred of these student protesters faced off with 200 students who support the provincial governor June 1, the fourth day of their occupation, according to the *Jakarta Post*.

Events of 1965–66

Continued from Page 12

[U.S. president John] Kennedy, "I am the best bulwark in Indonesia against Communism."

This was completely true. Sukarno's greatest single success as a bourgeois politician was to attract and to hold the support of the Indonesian Communist party. Instead of mobilizing the workers and peasants to take power in Indonesia and open up the road to socialism, the Indonesian Communist party under D.N. Aidit placed political confidence in Sukarno and depended on him both to safeguard its own standing and to lead the struggle against imperialism and indigenous reaction. The result was a debacle for the Communist party on the scale of the one experienced in Germany with the rise of Hitler.

The Kremlin, of course, shares responsibility for the immense defeat in Indonesia, for Aidit was only practicing the line of "peaceful coexistence" developed by the Soviet bureaucracy.

Peking, too, helped pave the way for the counterrevolutionary victory in Indonesia. Despite the radical language and the many references to Lenin, Mao and his circle covered up Aidit's opportunist policies if they did not actively encourage them out of their own eagerness to please Sukarno as a diplomatic ally.

The end result was to weaken the world position of both the People's Republic of China and the Soviet Union, not to mention the Democratic Republic of Vietnam and all the other workers states. This was one of the big reasons for the "delight" in Washington over the turn of events.

The main victims of the defeat in Vietnam are, of course, the workers and poor peasants who placed their confidence in the capacity of the Communist party to lead them in a struggle for power. They had to pay with one of the most monstrous slaughters of modern times for the illusions sowed by Stalin's heirs in Indonesia.

How long will it take them to rebuild from the ground up, this time constructing a leadership genuinely shaped in accordance with the principles of Leninism? A precise answer cannot be given to this question. But that the Indonesian workers and poor peasants will do it, is absolutely certain.

CORRECTIONS

The credit for the photo of Crown workers in Houston in the May 25 issue was incorrect. The photo was taken by Karen Sloan, one of the locked-out Crown workers.

In the same issue, in the article "Black farmers call for end to discrimination," Ralph Paige was identified incorrectly. He is the head of the Federation of Southern Cooperatives.

In the May 11 issue, the article "Amtrak workers protest firing in Washington, D.C.," stated, "Headley's case is now supposed to go before the public law board." It should have read, "Headley's case has now gone before a public law board."

Pennsylvania: striking miners win solidarity

This column is devoted to reporting the resistance by working people to the employers' assault on their living standards, working conditions, and unions.

We invite you to contribute short items to this column as a way for other fighting workers

action and are preparing for what they believe will be a long strike. The contract mine that owner Pagnotti imposed on workers here in December was tantamount to "leaving our civil liberties on this side of the railroad tracks when we go in there to work," striker Lynch

Laurentian Bank are members of the Office and Professional Employees International Union. It is the only bank in Canada where employees are unionized. In January 1997 the bank had 161 branches with 1175 unionized employees. If the proposed cuts are implemented there will be only 93 branches left and 510 fewer union members.

Demonstrators came not only from Montreal but from other cities in Quebec. Union member Jeannine Lacasse, who is a financial counselor from the city of Granby southeast of Montreal, explained, "We already accepted a reduction in hours and in pay to prevent layoffs."

ON THE PICKET LINE

around the world to read about and learn from these important struggles. Jot down a few lines about what is happening in your union, at your workplace, or other workplaces in your area, including interesting political discussions.

HAZLETON, Pennsylvania — Striking members of the United Mine Workers (UMWA) celebrated a victory here recently when officials of the Reading and Blue Mountain Railroad announced they would no longer transport coal from the struck Jeddo mine. "Train engineers said they wouldn't cross our picket line until the strike is settled," striker Robert Lynch told the *Hazleton Standard-Speaker*. When the company tried to truck the coal out, Lynch said, "we asked the drivers to honor our picket line. They did."

Nearly 60 members of UMWA Locals 803 and 1531 struck the strip mine owned by James Pagnotti on March 26, four years after their last contract expired. Up until 1994, the miners worked under a master anthracite contract covering workers at the region's unionized mines. In 1994 the mine owners refused to agree to a contract covering all the mines, but the three other major anthracite mines in the area settled with separate contracts.

Jeddo Coal Company held out, forcing miners to work without a contract until late last year when it imposed its "last, best offer." This included drastic reductions in health-care benefits, and the right to contract out nearly every job at the mine. Economically, the miners say, they fell about \$1.25 per hour behind miners at the area's other three unionized anthracite mines. Now that the four-year agreements are up again, they are about to lose yet another \$1.25. Two of the contracts — at Blaschak Coal Company and at Reading Anthracite — just expired. Miners at the third, Lehigh Coal and Navigation, have already reached an agreement.

But economics are not the primary reason why miners here took

told the *Militant*. Lynch, a welder, is a 25-year veteran of the Jeddo mine. What was the standard owner's "right to manage" in the last contract, he explained, became the "right to hire, fire, make schedule and personnel changes, and impose 'reasonable rules' in the contract forced on us. They don't recognize seniority or past practices going back to 1903.

"When we first heard this 'last, best offer' would be forced on us, we laughed," Lynch explains. "We said we'll just appeal it to the National Labor Relations Board. We went through two appeals before the NLRB in Philadelphia, and both ruled against us. Then we went to a higher level, and we lost there too. We went to Washington, D.C., and they said it was fine too. With one stroke the company neutralizes every gain we have fought and died for, and the NLRB says it's okay."

On March 15, before the strike began, more than 400 UMWA members and other unionists and supporters rallied here in support of the Jeddo miners. Some 30 area union officials and strikers gathered in Scranton May 22 at the statue of former UMWA president John Mitchell to bring attention to the strike. In addition, Lynch says, they organize to picket the Jeddo Coal's headquarters once a week in Wilkes-Barre and they picket the mine owners at their homes.

"We're telling workers around here you don't have to take this crap," Lynch says. "Just like those McDonald's workers did out in Ohio."

Montreal bank workers rally against cuts

MONTREAL — Some 300 employees of the Laurentian Bank and their supporters rallied here May 24 outside of a branch of the bank that is scheduled to be closed along with 23 others on June 22. The demonstration was called to protest the closing of the branches, which will eliminate up to 300 jobs and cuts in service to clients of the bank.

The workers at the Quebec-based

British Columbia Hospital workers strike

Vancouver, Canada—Some 20,000 hospital workers throughout British Columbia walked off the job for four hours May 26. Officials of the Hospital Employees Union (HEU) called the strike to pressure the provincial government and the health-care bosses for a new agreement with its 45,000 members whose contract expired March 31.

The provincial government is demanding all unionized public workers, including hospital workers, accept a three-year deal with a wage freeze in the first two years followed by a 2 percent raise in the third year. Since April 1995 HEU members have received only a 1 percent wage increase. Some 160,000 public workers in British Columbia are renegotiating their contracts this year. The government claims it can't afford wage increases for these workers.

The hospital bosses are also demanding cuts to vacation time, reduced dental coverage, lower payment for on-the-job injuries, and a cut of up to 30 percent in payments to workers on long-term disability for more than two years.

At Vancouver General Hospital, the province's largest, 800 workers went on strike. Christa Stenback, who works with senior citizens said, "It's a shame we have to do this, but in order to get our message out we have to be strong."

A porter who declined to give her name said, "Money is not important. I just don't want to give up anything." But Shada Bains, a cleaner, said, "Money is important. I live paycheck to paycheck. Job security is also important and I don't want to give up vacation time. We need to be united and fight for our rights."

Negotiations resumed the day



Militant/Nancy Cole

Striking miner in Hazelton, Pennsylvania, May 20.

following the walkout.

Rockwell workers strike in Iowa, California

CORALVILLE, Iowa—More than 1,200 members of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) walked off the job May 28 at the Rockwell International Corp. facilities in Coralville, Iowa, and Newport Beach, California. This is the first strike at the Coralville plant. The electrical workers rejected a contract that was approved by workers at two other Rockwell plants, in Cedar Rapids, Iowa and Dallas, Texas.

Rockwell is a major war industry supplier. At some 100 plants around the world, workers produce semiconductors, industrial automation equipment, and aircraft guidance and communications systems.

The 650 workers at the Coralville plant, known as Rockwell Collins, produce communications and guidance systems for commercial and military uses. They rejected the company proposal May 23 that offered a pay increase of only five cents per hour, and at the same time increased amounts workers must pay for visits to the doctor. The company sought a five-year contract, up from the current three-year term. In addition, eye-care coverage promised to the workers was postponed until 2001.

Workers on the picket line explained that the plant was opened 12 years ago. Work from the Rockwell plant in nearby Cedar Rapids was moved to the new facility, but top pay at Coralville is only \$9.37 per hour, \$4 less than wages paid at the Cedar Rapids plant. In the last seven years workers have seen raises totaling only 67 cents. Rockwell touts the Coralville plant as its showplace facility.

"I'd like to see upper management live on the wages we're living on," said Local 1634 member Jane Rodgers.

Some 75 percent of the workforce are women, and many are single parents. "I'm a single mother and this is my only source of income and I'll stand here on the picket line till doomsday," said Deb Hofer, an assembly operator with eight years at Rockwell Collins.

Following the expiration of their last agreement May 1, Local 1634 members rejected two contract proposals. Kris Villhauer, who has worked in the plant 10 years said, "I think the company was blown away that we voted down the contract."

When the walkout began at midnight some 150 workers turned out for picketing at the plant. The company is trying to maintain production using foremen and engineers.

On May 29 Rockwell received an injunction from the Johnson County District Court restricting IBEW pickets to no more than four workers per gate "to maintain safety of all personnel at Rockwell gates."

The unionists take a different view. "It is typical Rockwell Collins," said striker Dave Green. "That way they can limit the number of people in picket lines to make it look like there is no support for the strike."

The unionists are organizing to line the public road leading into the plant with strikers and supporters early June 1 to protest as bosses and nonunion technicians enter the factory. Striker Kim Bencotter in Coralville summed up the mood of the unionists: "There are a lot of rebels here, which the company bred into us."

In Newport Beach 600 members of IBEW Local 2295 went on strike demanding higher wages and an end to long workdays.

The workers voted 246-240 to reject the proposed five-year contract. The strikers said the key issue was the forced 12-hour days that cause accidents, are exhausting, and create child-care problems. The contract also contained provisions for annual wage increases of 3-5 percent, which workers thought were too low.

Nancy Cole, member of International Association of Machinists Local 1776 and Joe Kleidon in Philadelphia; Grant Hargrave, member of IAM Local 1758 in Montreal; Mike Barker, member of the HEU in Vancouver; Mark Friedman, member of the IAM in Los Angeles; and Ray Parsons, member of United Steelworkers of America Local 310 in Des Moines, contributed to this column.

LETTERS

4,000 march in Alaska

Four thousand Alaskans marched in downtown Anchorage in the largest political demonstration ever held in Alaska — "We the People—Alaskan Tribes Standing Our Ground" May 7.

The event was organized by the Native American Rights Foundation (NARF) and the Alaskan Tribes. It followed three days of meetings of the Alaskan Conference of Tribes. Four hundred delegates from Alaska villages attended to decide what further actions would be taken after the February Supreme Court decision, which denied the village of Venetie the right to sovereign tribal powers over land it controls.

Alaska tribes from all over the state were represented at the march. They call themselves the First Nations — the people who inhabited North America before it was "discovered" by Europeans. They are Aleut, Athabaskan, Cupik, Eyak,

Haida, Inupiat, Tlingit, Tsimshian, Siberian Yupik, Sugpiak, and Yupit peoples who are standing together as one nation. They are dignified and hopeful for the future.

Among those cosponsoring the march were Hispanic Organized Leaders of Alaska (HOLA), the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), some labor unions, and church groups.

In their Declaration of Fundamental Rights of Alaska's First Nations, formulated at the end of the conference, the first point is "the right to develop and maintain our distinct identities and attributes, and the right to protect, preserve, and retain our customs, traditions and tribal government authorities." This important march is just a beginning of uniting minorities and Native peoples.

Ruth Sheridan
Anchorage, Alaska

Political prisoner

I am a political prisoner incarcerated at the Indiana State Prison. I am writing in hopes of you putting me on your mailing list.

A prisoner
Michigan City, Indiana

Jericho March '98

I'm a political prisoner and took part in the Jericho March '98! I'm requesting your newspaper on a monthly basis. My appreciation and thanks in advance.

A prisoner
Michigan City, Indiana

The letters column is an open forum for all viewpoints on subjects of general interest to our readers. Please keep your letters brief. Where necessary they will be abridged. Please indicate if you prefer that your initials be used rather than your full name.

Kosova: Belgrade escalates assault

Washington floats plans for deploying combat forces in Albania, Macedonia

BY ARGIRIS MALAPANIS

Belgrade has unleashed a new offensive against Albanians fighting for self-determination in the province of Kosova, using tanks and heavy artillery, and setting whole villages near the border with Albania on fire. As a result, more than 3,000 peasants and other Albanians fled from Kosova into northeastern Albania between May 28 and June 3.

Communications have been cut off for days with western Kosova, as Belgrade's special forces have attempted to seal off the area from the outside world. "The whole area is under blockade, and it's very hard to get accurate information," said Lulëzon Jagxhiu, 22, a leader of the Independent Students Union in Pristina, Kosova's capital, in a June 4 telephone interview.

At the same time, numerous reports indicate that units of the Kosova Liberation Army (UCK), a guerrilla group that has been waging an armed struggle for independence of Kosova, have stepped up resistance.

"The forces of resistance are growing every day," Jagxhiu said. "The thousands of people being bombarded have nothing left but to defend themselves, to fight for their lives, their houses, for freedom."

Washington and other imperialist powers are trying to take advantage of the conflict to openly prepare for military intervention in the area, under the guise of supporting the struggle of Kosovar Albanians against national oppression. Meeting in Brussels June 3, ambassadors of the 16 governments that belong to NATO discussed plans for deploying combat forces to Albania and Macedonia. "We are keeping all options open," said NATO secretary general Javier Solana.

Gen. Wesley Clark, the U.S. commander of NATO forces in Europe, had stated earlier that the Atlantic military alliance was carrying out "detailed studies of possible preventive deployment." While a decision on military intervention is not imminent, military aid for the governments of Albania and Macedonia and joint "training" exercises with NATO troops near the Kosova border have already been approved by the Clinton administration.

Washington maintains 8,000 troops in Bosnia, dominating a NATO occupation force of 30,000 in that republic. The U.S. rulers are now attempting to deepen their intervention in Yugoslavia in order to overturn the remaining gains of the 1945 revolution in that country and reestablish the domination of capitalism. These moves go hand-in-hand with NATO's expansion into Eastern and Central Europe and with tightening the imperialist encirclement of Russia.

Western Kosova in flames

"The situation in the western part of Kosova is grave," Jagxhiu stated. "Drenica is also under a new siege."

Drenica is a mountainous region made up of 50 villages with 65,000 inhabitants near Pristina where Serbian authorities began the crackdown against the independence movement at the end of February. About 85 Albanians were killed there in police and army assaults February 28 and March 5. Belgrade has now concentrated its wrath on the villages inhabited overwhelmingly by Albanians near the border between Kosova and Albania.

"Many villages in the municipalities of Deçan and Gjakova are being bombarded with heavy artillery," Jagxhiu said. "As civilians flee, the Serbian special forces set on fire the houses that have not been destroyed to prevent Albanians from returning. The town of Deçan itself has been turned to rubble, as well as a number of villages near the border."

The Serbian regime has poured thousands of fresh police and army troops into the region and is attempting to clear a five-mile-deep zone along the border with Albania. Belgrade claims that many Albanians have

been crossing the border into Kosova, bringing weapons and human reinforcements to the Kosova Liberation Army. While information on casualties is hard to pinpoint, most reports indicate that dozens of people have been killed in the last few days, bringing the toll to over 200, mostly Albanians, since March.

The regime of Yugoslav president Slobodan Milosevic has ruled Kosova under a state of emergency since 1989, when it revoked the province's autonomous status. Since then, most Albanians have been fired from state administration, health-care services, and factories. Instruction in Albanian has been banned in college.

Most Albanian students have been attending classes in the Albanian language at homes and other makeshift facilities at a parallel university. Jagxhiu said that implementation of an education agreement between Belgrade and Kosovar Albanians that would return the university to Albanian students and professors by the end of June is not being carried out. Only one engineering faculty building has been returned, he said, but pro-Belgrade Serbs broke windows and removed all the equipment before turning over the keys in May. Ninety percent of Kosova's population of 2.1 million are Albanians and 8 percent are Serbs.

The heavy-handed repression by Belgrade is causing fissures among the Serbian regime's army and police forces. Associated Press, Reuters, and other news agencies have reported that fighting has recently broke out between UCK militants and Serbian troops near Kosova's capital, shutting down Pristina's airport.

"Reuters and other agencies aren't doing objective reporting," Jagxhiu noted. "We don't trust them."

The fighting that reportedly took place near the airport, where a Serbian military base is located, has been between Serb soldiers attempting to desert and their officers, the student leader stated. "A number of Serb soldiers and policemen are refusing to carry out orders to indiscriminately bomb villages," he said. "This is new."

The June 3 *Telegraf* daily, published in Belgrade, reported that 100 Belgrade cops have been fired for refusing to go to Kosova and fight. "We have reason to believe this," Jagxhiu said, "coming from a paper that's not on our side."

Jagxhiu said that daily protests for independence and demanding a withdrawal of Belgrade's forces have been taking place in Pristina for nearly two months. They are called by the Democratic League of Kosova (DLK) and other political parties that predominate among Albanians. Most are small, in the range of a few thousand, according to Jagxhiu. But occasionally larger marches take place. Tens of thousands demonstrated June 4, for example.

The Independent Students Union has focused its energies over the last few weeks on organizing shelter and food for students from other areas of Kosova who are stranded in Pristina because of the fighting.

It has also been campaigning for the release of seven leaders of the Students Union from Prezren, all high school students. They were arrested by Serb police on May 23 on charges of "preparing for terrorism," after organizing a first aid class. They remain in detention.

Under the circumstances, the center of the

structures is a reality that should not be ignored," said Albania's prime minister, Fatos Nano, recently. Nano's regime has repeatedly called for deploying NATO troops in Albania, at the border with Kosova. Tirana is now claiming Serb army units are crossing the border into Albania in pursuit of rebels. "We have had several reports of in-

Workers in south Korea strike against unemployment



About 2,000 workers demonstrate at Seoul railway station May 27, chanting and singing as tens of thousands joined a two-day general strike called by the Korean Confederation of Trade Unions against growing unemployment. Hyundai Motor, Korea's biggest automaker, has threatened to cut down a fifth of its workforce of 49,000. The trade unions announced another general strike for June 10 if demands to halt mass layoffs and increase compensation benefits are not met.

struggle for self-determination has shifted to the rural areas, especially western Kosova, Jagxhiu said.

Thousands of Albanians have been joining the ranks of the Kosova Liberation Army, frustrated by the DLK's continued reliance on "help from the international community" and mounting Serbian repression.

DLK leader and Republic of Kosova president Ibrahim Rugova has been more openly calling for U.S. intervention into Kosova as the solution to the crisis. "We urged an increased U.S. presence in Kosova and for more protection on the part of the United States for the people of Kosova," Rugova said after meeting U.S. president William Clinton during a visit to Washington May 29. "Any use of NATO power should be directed toward Kosova, not surrounding it," added Vetton Surroi, editor of the Albanian-language daily *Koha Ditore*, published in Pristina. Surroi, also a DLK leader, accompanied Rugova on the recent U.S. visit.

Tirana wants NATO troops at border

The government of Albania, which has so far condemned UCK activities and has identified with the Rugova leadership, indicated recently a possible shift in its policy on the use of force by Albanians in Kosova.

"In Kosova, people have taken up arms in self-defense and their organization in

cursions into our territory by Serb commando teams that appear to be scouting the area," said Nano June 3.

NATO officials have turned down such requests in the past, but are now contemplating such a move. Gen. Wesley Clark has indicated that about 20,000 soldiers would be needed to "police" the entire Kosova-Albania border.

In addition to floating plans for troop deployments, Washington is threatening tougher sanctions on Belgrade and implementing a ban on foreign investments in Serbia that had been approved earlier but suspended by the U.S. government after Milosevic agreed to meet Rugova in mid-May.

Moscow has objected to military intervention, stating NATO cannot post troops in Albania without the approval of the United Nations.

The Russian government "opposes any decisions leading to the use of external forces interfering in those problems," said Russian foreign ministry spokesman Valery Nesterushkin. Moscow has been on a collision course with Washington over expansion of NATO into Eastern Europe and U.S. attempts not to only dominate the oil in the former Soviet republics of the Caspian Sea region, but to establish a stronger regional line of influence and pressure across the southern flank of Russia, from Iraq to Azerbaijan.